Ukraine War: Early Reports (Feb–June 2022)
Part 1

The Author Dipti Dhakul Has Compiled a Selection of News Articles From Nikkei Asia's-Ukraine War: Free To Read, Section, Covering the Period From February 24, 2022, to June 30, 2022. These Articles Provide Reporting on the Key Developments of the Russia-Ukraine War During its Early Months, Including Military Actions, Diplomatic Efforts, Economic Consequences, and Humanitarian Impacts. The Collection Offers a Chronological Record of the Conflict as Reported as by *Nikkei Asia*, Presenting an Objective View of Events as They Unfolded.

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Thursday, Feb. 24

11:15 p.m. Leaders from the Group of Seven advanced economies hold an emergency virtual meeting, agreeing to bring forward "severe and coordinated economic and financial sanctions" against Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

"This crisis is a serious threat to the rules-based international order, with ramifications well beyond Europe," they say in a joint statement issued after the summit. "We call on the Russian Federation to stop the bloodshed, to immediately de-escalate and to withdraw its forces from Ukraine." Read here.

11:00 p.m. While the conflict unfolds in Ukraine, in Asia, Taiwan says it had scrambled jets in response to Chinese aircraft entering its air defense zone.

9:05 p.m. China's embassy in Ukraine notifies Chinese nationals there that given the rapidly worsening situation, the embassy is preparing charter planes to fly back citizens in batches. The deadline to apply for a spot is midnight on Feb. 27.

9:01 p.m. In Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's first comments on the Ukraine conflict, he says, "We find the military operation unacceptable and reject it."

"This step is against international law and strikes heavy blow to the region's peace tranquillity and stability," Erdogan says in a televised speech, adding, "We are saddened that Russia and Ukraine, both friendly countries with which we have close political economic and social relations, are facing off each other."

5:10 p.m. "Whether or not Putin deepens the crisis with a further shock and awe attack to conduct a regime change in Kyiv or decides to consolidate his conquests in the southeast of Ukraine, there will be a series of significant impacts in Asia," writes Adm. James Stavridis, the 16th supreme allied commander of NATO. Read his op-ed here.

12:02 p.m. Putin addresses Russians in a televised speech, saying a "special military operation" is underway in Ukraine. His claimed objective is to “demilitarize” and “de-nazify” Ukraine.

Friday, Feb. 25

8:40 p.m. Chinese President Xi Jinping tells Russian President Vladimir Putin that China supports resolving the Ukraine issue through negotiation. Xi says China maintains a consistent basic position on respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and abiding by the purposes and principles of the United Nations charter, according to a tweet by the state-run Global Times.

A report on the talks by China's CCTV says Putin explained the historical background and the status of Russia's military operation, stressing that the U.S. and NATO had ignored Russia's concerns. The report says Russia is willing to hold high-level talks with Ukraine. According to the state broadcaster, Xi said China would decide its position based on the merits of the Ukraine issue itself.

6:40 p.m. Rahm Emanuel, the U.S. ambassador to Japan, praises Japan's "swift and certain" sanctions against Russia for invading Ukraine, warning that a lack of a coordinated response could threaten stability in Asia. "It should be noted why the countries in the Indo-Pacific led by Japan but including Australia and New Zealand, South Korea have spoken up," Emanuel says in a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan. "Because whether it's in Europe or here in the Indo-Pacific, there are basic tenets and principles that uphold the system."

5:00 p.m. Japan's Rakuten Group CEO Hiroshi Mikitani says the company will provide coupons for Ukrainian users to make free international calls with its Viber Out service. Viber, which the Japanese e-commerce group acquired in 2014, has 96% market penetration in Ukraine. "A social platform is what we are pursuing ... so we hope a democratic

government will be maintained," Mikitani said during a Friday news conference in Tokyo.

4:33 p.m. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan expresses concern over the economic fallout of the Ukraine conflict on developing countries during a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow. Khan was the first world leader to meet Putin since he ordered the invasion of Ukraine, having arrived in Moscow for a previously planned visit just hours before the attack began.

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at a News Conference in Moscow on Feb. 10. (Kremlin via Reuters)

4:24 p.m. Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin discussed ways to protect bilateral ties in response to sanctions against Russia, Tokayev's office says. Kazakhstan is closely allied with Russia and leads economic and military blocs tied to Moscow. The Kazakh tenge has plummeted along with the ruble since Russia invaded Ukraine on Thursday.

3:00 p.m. A few dozen demonstrators gathered in front of the Russian Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand, to protest

against the country's invasion of Ukraine. The protesters from multinational backgrounds held up placards calling on Russia and President Vladimir Putin to stop the aggression. Ukrainian participants sang their national anthem in solidarity with their country.

2:15 p.m. U.S. wheat futures hit their highest in nearly 14 years as Russia's invasion of Ukraine stokes fears of disruptions in the supply of grain from the key Black Sea region. The most active CBOT May wheat contract was up 0.9% at $9.43 a bushel, after peaking at $9.60-3/4 earlier in the session, its highest since June 2008.

Wheat's sharp gains over the past few days highlight that the market sees a high chance of wheat from Russia being largely sanctioned off market, said Tobin Gorey, director of agricultural strategy at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, according to Reuters.

A Wheat Field Near the Ukrainian Village of Zhovtneve. Sharp Rises in the Price of Wheat Over the Past Few Days Indicate Investors See a High Chance That Sanctions Will Remove Russian Wheat From the Market. © Reuters

10:50 a.m. Australia imposes more sanctions against Russia, targeting several of its elite citizens and lawmakers.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison also says it is "unacceptable" that China was easing trade restrictions with Moscow at the time when it invaded Ukraine.

10:38 a.m. Taiwan's Premier Su Tseng-chang says the island will join democratic countries in putting sanctions on Russia over the invasion of Ukraine, although he did not give details, Reuters reports.

9:57 a.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida says the country will impose additional sanctions on Russia, including restrictions on chip exports. "The Ukraine invasion by Russia is a serious issue affecting international order that includes not only Europe but also Asia," Kishida told reporters in a news conference.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken Meets With India's Foreign Minister, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Before the Quad Meeting of Foreign Ministers in Melbourne on Feb. 11. © Reuters

8:00 a.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar after President Joe Biden said Washington had not yet worked out its coordination with New Delhi on the Ukraine conflict.

"Secretary Blinken stressed the importance of a strong

collective response to condemn Russia's invasion and call for an immediate withdrawal and cease-fire," according to a statement by State Department spokesman Ned Price.

Neither side provided details on what, if anything, the top diplomats agreed on.

7:00 a.m. U.S. markets swing wildly in reaction to the Ukraine conflict, setting up a turbulent trading day in Asia. The S&P 500 index closes with a gain after taking an early dive.

6:10 a.m. The European Council "condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine."

5:50 a.m. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi tells Putin in a phone call that NATO's expansion is a "serious threat" to the region's security and stability, Reuters reports, citing the semiofficial Nour News.

5:20 a.m. The International Atomic Energy Agency issues a statement on the situation in Ukraine: "Regarding the situation at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, Ukraine has informed the IAEA that 'unidentified armed forces' have taken control of all facilities of the State Specialized Enterprise Chernobyl NPP, located within the exclusion zone. The counterpart added that there had been no casualties nor destruction at the industrial site. Director General [Rafael] Grossi said it is of vital importance that the

safe and secure operations of the nuclear facilities in that zone should not be affected or disrupted in any way."

5:00 a.m. Responding to the Russian attack, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Putin by telephone to appeal for "an immediate cessation of violence," according to the prime minister's office. Read here.

4:50 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden announces new sanctions against Russia following the invasion, trying to cripple the country's ability to conduct business with the world and ultimately pressure the Russian president to reverse course. "Putin is the aggressor. Putin chose this war, and now he and his country will bear the consequences," Biden tells a news conference. Read here.

Saturday, Feb. 26

11:53 p.m. Russian forces are becoming increasingly frustrated by what the U.S. believes is "viable" Ukrainian resistance, a U.S. defense official says. "We know that they have not made the progress that they have wanted to make, particularly in the north. They have been frustrated by what they have seen is a very determined resistance," the official tells Reuters, without providing evidence.

11:15 p.m. France seizes a car cargo ship in the English Channel that Washington says was linked to the son of a former Russian spy chief, in one of the first visible displays of the West enforcing sanctions on Moscow over its Ukraine invasion. The Baltic Leader was headed for St. Petersburg but was diverted to the port of Boulogne-sur-Mer in northern France, Captain Veronique Magnin of the French Maritime Prefecture tells Reuters. The vessel was "strongly suspected of being linked to Russian interests targeted by the sanctions," she says.

10:45 p.m. President Joe Biden instructed the U.S. State Department to release up to an additional $350 million worth of weapons from U.S. stocks to Ukraine on Friday as it struggles to repulse a Russian invasion, Reuters reports. Ukraine has been asking for Javelin anti-tank weapons and Stinger missiles to shoot down aircraft.

10:32 p.m. Hungary is accepting all Ukrainian citizens and legal residents, regardless of whether they are subject to military conscription into the Ukrainian armed forces, Prime Minister Viktor Orban tells a news conference. "We're letting everyone in," Orban says. "I've seen people who have no travel documents, but we're providing them too with

travel documents. And we're also allowing in those who have arrived from third countries after the proper screening."

6:15 p.m. Moscow will respond to the seizure of money held abroad by its citizens and companies by seizing the funds of foreigners and foreign companies in Russia, the RIA news agency quoted Dmitry Medvedev, deputy head of the Security Council of Russia, as saying on Saturday. Russia does not rule out nationalizing the assets of companies registered in the U.S., EU and other "unfriendly jurisdictions," Medvedev was quoted as saying.

An Apartment Building in Kyiv on Feb. 26 After It Was Damaged by Shelling. © Reuters

5:47 p.m. Russia's communications regulator accused 10 local media outlets on Saturday of falsely depicting what Russia calls a special military operation in Ukraine and distributing false information about events there. Among those sent warning letters were Echo Moskvy, a popular radio station, and Novaya Gazeta, a newspaper critical of the government whose editor-in-chief, Dmitry Muratov, was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize last year. Roskomnadzor, the regulator, ordered the media to delete the offending

information or face restricted access to their websites and media resources.

5:28 p.m. At least 198 Ukrainians, including three children, have been killed as a result of the Russian invasion, the head of the Ukrainian Health Ministry was quoted by the Interfax news agency as saying on Saturday. He said 1,115 people were wounded, including 33 children. It was unclear whether he was referring only to civilian casualties.

5:04 p.m. The Ukrainian Embassy in Moscow's staff is evacuating to Latvia, the Latvian foreign ministry tells Reuters. "It was their plea, we readily agreed. We are assisting them in the process and help with settling down," Latvian foreign ministry spokesperson Janis Bekeris says. He declined to say whether the embassy staff had already arrived in Latvia, citing security concerns.

2:00 p.m. Zelenskyy was asked by the U.S. to leave Kyiv, but declined, according to The Associated Press. "The fight is here; I need ammunition, not a ride," he is quoted as saying by an American intelligence official, who describes the president as upbeat despite apparent Russian moves to encircle the capital.

1:47 p.m. After suggesting Chinese nationals display their country's flag in their vehicles for protection in Ukraine two days ago, China's embassy in the nation is now urging its people not to reveal their identity or give any identifying signs. The message was sent through a WeChat post, citing "increasingly extreme behavior" in Ukraine.

11:42 a.m. Russian troops attacked an army base located on a main avenue in the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv but the assault was repelled, the Ukrainian military says.

Separately, the Interfax Ukraine agency says Russian soldiers were trying to capture one of the city's electricity generating stations.

9:26 a.m. The U.S. government joins European countries in slapping sanctions on Russian President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

"President Putin and Minister Lavrov are directly responsible for Russia's unprovoked and unlawful further invasion of Ukraine, a democratic sovereign state," the Treasury Department said in a statement.

8:15 a.m. Zelenskyy has asked Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett to mediate in the conflict with Russia, Reuters reports, citing the Ukrainian envoy to Israel said.

The United Nations Security Council at U.N. Headquarters in New York. © Reuters

7:54 a.m. Russia vetoed a Western-led U.N. Security Council resolution condemning its invasion of Ukraine by voting against it. India, China, and the United Arab Emirates abstained. There were 11 votes in favor.

"You cannot veto the truth," the U.S. representative says.

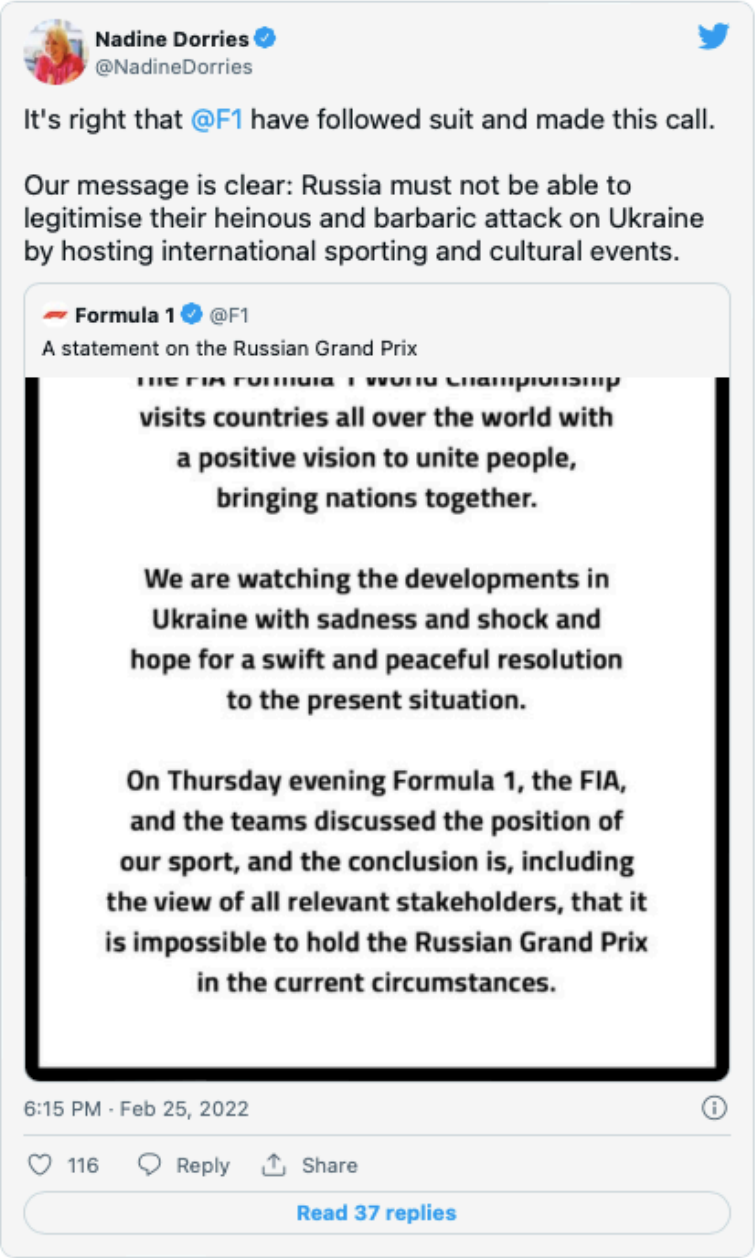
7:25 a.m. The U.S. tables a resolution at the U.N. Security Council with an appeal: "Vote no, or abstain, if you do not support the charter and align yourselves with the aggressive and unprovoked actions of Russia. Just as Russia had a choice, so do you."

6:53 a.m. The sports world is grappling with how to react to Russia's invasion. UEFA has moved the Champions League final from St. Petersburg to Paris, and Formula 1 has canceled its Russian Grand Prix race.

The International Olympic Committee has urged sports bodies to cancel or relocate events in Russia and Belarus. World championships for hockey, volleyball, and shooting are all currently scheduled to be held in Russia.

Russian and NHL hockey star Alex Ovechkin has made an anti-war plea to the media. "Please. No more war. It doesn't matter who is in the war -- Russia, Ukraine, different countries -- we have to live in peace," he says.

The F1 Russian Grand Prix will not be held, and soccer's UEFA Champions League final has been relocated.



5:40 a.m. All eyes are on China and India ahead of a United Nations Security Council meeting. The council is supposed to vote on a Western-led resolution on the situation in Ukraine. Russia is expected to veto, putting the attention on how China and India vote.

The meeting has been delayed by a "language discrepancy" between the U.S. and an important partner.

4:50 a.m. A Russian warning on any moves to include Finland and Sweden in NATO has raised eyebrows.

"Their accession to NATO can have detrimental consequences," Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said in a news conference, adding that there could be "military and political consequences."

3:11 a.m. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has spoken with European counterparts on Ukraine and detailed China's position on the matter.

China "firmly advocates respecting and safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and earnestly abides by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter," according to a news release by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "This position is consistent and clear, and it applies equally to Ukraine."

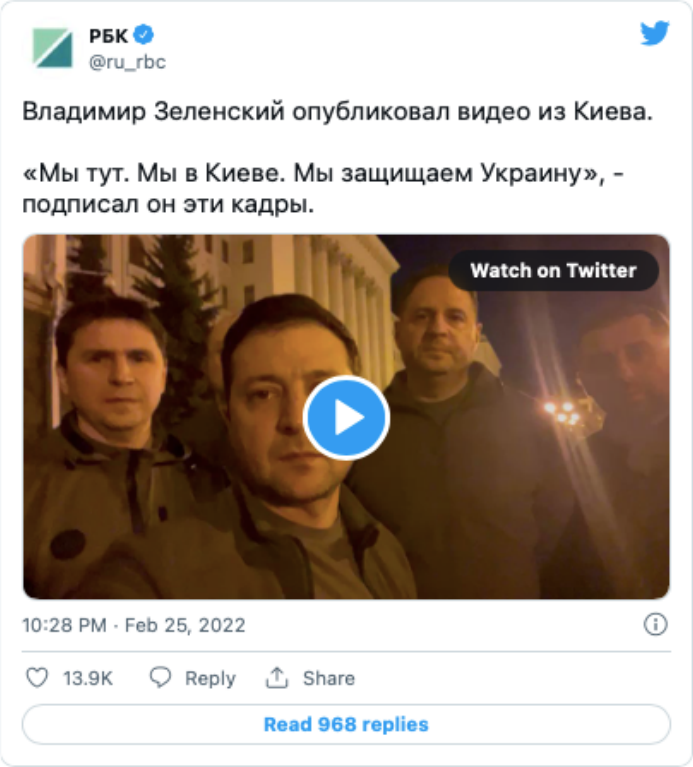
Given decades of NATO eastward expansion, Russia's "legitimate security demands should be taken seriously and properly addressed," but that the current situation in Ukraine is "something we do not want to see," the statement says.

3:00 a.m. Zelenskyy holds a discussion with U.S. President Joe Biden regarding U.S. and allied support for Ukraine.

2:15 a.m. Zelenskyy posts a video from the government quarter in Kyiv following speculation in Russian media that he had fled.

"We are here. We are in Kyiv. We are defending Ukraine," he says in the video.

Zelenskyy stands with other officials, one of whom -- the prime minister -- shows his phone to prove that it's current.



1:25 a.m. Consensus among EU nations remains elusive on the severity of financial sanctions, including the option of banning Russia from the SWIFT global interbank system.

In a meeting of European ministers of economy and finance in Paris, France's Bruno Le Maire maintains that "all the options are on the table."

German Finance Minister Christian Lindner expresses cautious openness to a SWIFT ban.

"We are open, but you have to know what you're doing," Lindner tells reporters.

1:15 a.m. "NATO should have taken a more decisive step" in response to the Ukraine crisis, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan tells reporters after Friday prayers, adding that Ukraine needs more than just "advice" from Western capitals.

"Without a determined stance, a situation emerges described by [Ukrainian] President Zelenskyy as 'They are only giving us advice, no support,' which is against friendship and solidarity."

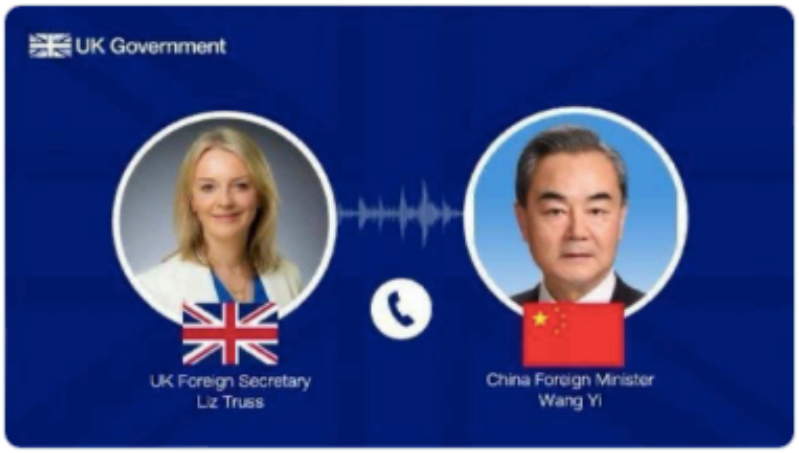
12:50 a.m. The European Union plans to freeze assets of Russian President Putin and his foreign minister, Sergey Lavrov, The Washington Post and other media report, citing people familiar with the talks.

"What is important today is that Mr. Putin and Mr. Lavrov, who are responsible for this situation, will now be severely sanctioned by the European Union," German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock says.

12:20 a.m. U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss urges Chinese counterpart Wang Yi to "stand up for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

Liz Truss @trussliz
United Kingdom government official

I spoke to 🇨🇳 FM Wang Yi about Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and made clear that Russia's actions are a flagrant breach of the UN Charter. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council we expect China to stand up for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.



8:38 PM · Feb 25, 2022

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Sunday, Feb. 27

11:05 p.m. Ukraine and Russia have agreed to unconditional talks, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says.

Officials from both sides have agreed to meet as Russian forces continue their campaign.

State television in Belarus also reports on the agreement. President Alexander Lukashenko has sought to broker the talks.

10:00 p.m. Rakuten Group CEO Hiroshi Mikitani announces that he and his family would make a personal donation of 1 billion yen ($8.7 million) for humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian government. The head of the Japanese conglomerate sent a personal letter to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy saying he was "deeply saddened" by news of Russia's military attack against the country. Rakuten's Viber messaging app is widely used in Ukraine.

9:25 p.m. Japan will join the international effort to block some Russian banks from the global SWIFT payment system, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announces. He tells reporters that Japan also plans to freeze assets held by Russian President Vladimir Putin and other officials.

9:10 p.m. Israel's army radio reports that Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has proposed to Putin that his country could mediate in the crisis.

8:20 p.m. Hungary's foreign minister says 66,000 people have crossed into the country from Ukraine in recent days. The United Nations says the total refugee outflow has hit 368,000 and "continues to rise."

8:10 p.m. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says his country has submitted an application against Russia to the International Court of Justice.

Ukraine has submitted its application against Russia to the ICJ. Russia must be held accountable for manipulating the notion of genocide to justify aggression. We request an urgent decision ordering Russia to cease military activity now and expect trials to start next week.

7:45 p.m. Germany will raise defense spending to over 2% of gross domestic product in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Chancellor Olaf Scholz says during a special parliament session. He says this is needed to protect Germany's "freedom and democracy." The 2022 budget will include 100 billion euros for the military.

The country has resisted calls from other Western powers to hike defense outlays, partly due to its own 20th century history. But the Ukraine war appears to be forcing a change of heart. The Scholz government has also broken with a policy of not delivering weapons to conflict zones, agreeing to send Ukraine anti-tank weapons, missiles and ammunition.

6:35 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin has been suspended as honorary president of the International Judo Federation, the sport's governing body announces, "in light of the ongoing war conflict in Ukraine."

6:03 p.m. The U.K. says Moscow must withdraw its troops before attempting to hold talks. "They cannot negotiate with a gun to the head of the Ukrainians," foreign secretary Liz Truss says.

5:48 p.m. Finland is set to close its airspace to Russian planes, its minister of transport says. Some other European countries, including Lithuania and Latvia, have also said they will do this, while Germany said it was preparing to do so.

4:40 p.m. A Russian delegation has arrived in Belarus for talks with Ukraine, a Kremlin spokesperson was quoted by the Ifax news agency as saying on Sunday. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy rejected the offer, saying Belarus itself was complicit in the Russian invasion, but he seems to leave the door open to negotiations in other locations, according to Reuters.

2:56 p.m. Russian troops have entered the city of Kharkiv, according to an adviser to Ukraine's interior minister.

1:15 p.m. Australia will provide "lethal aid" to Ukraine through NATO partners, namely the U.S. and U.K., Prime Minister Scott Morrison says. "We'll be working through those channels because that's the most effective way to do it," Morrison is quoted as saying by national broadcaster ABC. The report says the assistance is likely to take the form of financial contributions to weapons supplies, rather than direct shipments of arms. Canberra had previously promised nonlethal aid including military and medical equipment.

11:45 a.m. Russian troops have blown up a natural gas pipeline in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, according to Ukraine's state service of special communications and information protection. A video posted on Telegram showed a mushroom-shaped explosion. It was unclear what role the pipeline played and whether its destruction could disrupt gas supplies beyond the city or country.

11:07 a.m. Here's our explainer of what Russia's removal from the SWIFT international payments system means.

10:55 a.m. Russian missiles have hit the Ukrainian town of Vasylkiv southwest of the capital, Kyiv, setting an oil terminal ablaze, the town's mayor said in a video posted online.

10:53 a.m. Former U.S. President Donald Trump condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine and said he was praying for Ukrainians, marking a shift of tone from earlier this week when he praised Russian President Vladimir Putin.

9:05 a.m. Japan will coordinate closely with its G-7 counterparts in deciding whether to impose further

sanctions against Russia, Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi says.

Former Foreign Minister Taro Kono asks in a tweet why Japan hasn't joined the West's removal of Russia from SWIFT.

7:43 a.m. The United States, Britain, Europe and Canada on Saturday moved to block Russia's access to the SWIFT international payment system as part of another round of sanctions against Moscow as it continues its assault against Ukraine. The measures, which will also include restriction on the Russian central bank's international reserves, will be implemented in the coming days, the nations said in a joint statement.

5:22 a.m. Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich has given trustees of the London soccer team's foundation stewardship of the Premier League club, the Russian billionaire says, amid calls in the U.K. that he be sanctioned

over

Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Abramovich, who bought the London club in 2003, says the foundation was in the "best position to look after the interests" of the club. Abramovich remains the club owner and a statement did not reveal why he was giving the foundation stewardship nor any detail on how the arrangement would work.

4:20 a.m. An adviser to President Zelenskyy says Russia's attack on Kyiv is not advancing and that about 3,500 Russian soldiers had been killed or injured so far in Moscow's assault. "We are striking the enemy around Kyiv. The enemy is not moving for now," says Oleksiy Arestovych.

3:55 a.m. YouTube suspends multiple Russian channels, including state-funded media outlet RT, from generating revenue on the site, following a similar move by Facebook owner Meta Platforms. "In light of extraordinary circumstances in Ukraine ... we're pausing a number of channels' ability to monetize on YouTube, including several Russian channels affiliated with recent sanctions," YouTube said in a statement.

2:31 a.m. Britain's Prince William and his wife Kate say they stand with the people of Ukraine as they "bravely fight" the invasion by Russia, in a rare public comment for British royals on political issues.

The British royal family do not usually comment on major political matters, sticking to a constitutional norm that they should remain neutral. However, William's younger brother Harry and his wife Meghan, who have stepped down from royal duties to move to Los Angeles, said on their website on Thursday that they also stood with the Ukrainian people "against this breach of international and humanitarian law."

2:05 a.m. Berlin will supply Ukraine with defensive anti-tank weapons, surface-to-air missiles and ammunition, in a shift of policy as Russia's forces continued to pound Kyiv and other cities on day three of its campaign. After facing criticism for refusing to send weapons to Kyiv, unlike other Western allies, Chancellor Olaf Scholz says Berlin will supply Ukraine with 1,000 anti-tank weapons and 500 Stinger surface-to-air missiles from Bundeswehr stocks. Germany also approves the delivery of 400 rocket-propelled grenades from the Netherlands to Ukraine. Countries aiming to pass on German weapons exports need to apply for approval in Berlin first.

1:18 a.m. Germany pulls an about face over restrictions on Russian access to the SWIFT global interbank payment system, joining other Western powers in support of harsher sanctions aimed at halting Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "We are urgently working on how to limit the collateral damage of decoupling from SWIFT in such a way that it affects the right people. What we need is a targeted and functional restriction of SWIFT," German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and Economy Minister Robert Habeck say.

12:30 a.m. Five Chinese academics from prominent universities condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a rare instance of high-standing professors going against the government line.

"We strongly oppose Russia's war on Ukraine," the professors say. "We firmly support the actions of the Ukrainian people to defend their country. We are concerned that Russia's acts of force will lead to turmoil in Europe and the entire world, and trigger wider humanitarian disasters."

The statement is signed by Sun Jiang of Nanjing University, Wang Lixin of Peking University, Xu Guoqi, of the University of Hong Kong, Zhong Weimin, of Tsinghua University, and Chen Yan of Fudan University.

The statement was released on WeChat, but has been removed by the platform.

Monday, Feb. 28

10:58 p.m. The U.S. shuts its embassy in Minsk and allows nonemergency employees and family members to depart from its embassy in Moscow. All American staff have departed Belarus, U.S. Ambassador to Belarus Julie Fisher tweets.

"We took these steps due to security and safety issues stemming from the unprovoked and unjustified attack by Russian military forces in Ukraine," Secretary of State Antony Blinken says.

10:56 p.m. The referendum in Belarus to ditch its non-nuclear status is a "greatly worrying" move orchestrated by the country's strongman leader Alexander Lukashenko, European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell says. The vote to change the constitution, passed with 65% according to official data, could see nuclear weapons on Belarusian soil for the first time since the country gave them up after the fall of the Soviet Union.

10:20 p.m. Russia has barred airlines from 36 countries including Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy and Canada from using its airspace -- a retaliatory move after sweeping sanctions targeting its aviation sector.

9:12 p.m. Chinese ride hailer Didi Global has scrapped plans to withdraw from Russia -- a decision a source said reflects pressure in China to stick by Moscow amid the Ukraine war.

8:45 p.m. Dozens were killed in rocket strikes on the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv on Monday morning, an interior ministry adviser says. "Kharkiv has just been massively fired

upon by grads (rockets). Dozens of dead and hundreds of wounded," Anton Herashchenko writes on Facebook in a post seen by Reuters.

8:30 p.m. The Russian Embassy in China posts a note Monday night about the Feb. 25 call between Presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin on the popular messaging platform WeChat, revealing more details that Chinese state broadcaster CCTV didn't mention three days ago.

The embassy said in the post that "Xi Jinping stressed his respect for the actions taken by the Russian leader in the current crisis situation."

The post continues: "The two sides assessed the current international situation and reaffirmed their willingness to further close coordination and mutual support at the [United Nations] and other multilateral platforms. They noted that the use of illegal sanctions to achieve the self-interested goals of individual countries must not be allowed."

7:30 p.m. Talks between Ukraine and Russia are underway at the Belarusian border, a Ukrainian presidential adviser tells Reuters. The Ukrainian president's office has said the goal is to achieve an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of Russian forces.

A Helicopter Carrying Members of the Ukrainian Delegation Arrives to Talks With Russian Counterparts in the Gomel Region, Belarus, on Feb. 28. © BelTA/Handout via Reuters

5:00 p.m. Latvia's parliament voted unanimously to allow its nationals to fight in Ukraine if they wish, the legislative body says. "Our citizens who want to support Ukraine and volunteer to serve there to defend Ukraine's independence and our common security must be able to do so," said Juris Rancanis, chairman of the parliamentary defense, home affairs and corruption prevention commission, which drafted the law. Latvia, together with Baltic neighbors Estonia and Lithuania, was once ruled by Moscow. The three have long seen Russia as a threat, but unlike Ukraine, they have joined the European Union and NATO, which brings security guarantees.

4:18 p.m. The Russian central bank raises its key interest rate to 20% from 9.5% in an emergency move, and authorities have told export-focused companies to sell foreign currency as the ruble tumbled to record lows.

"External conditions for the Russian economy have drastically changed," the central bank said in a statement.

4:10 p.m. Singapore Airlines says it will suspend its flights between the city-state and Moscow effective Monday, citing "operational reasons." In a notice to passengers, the airline says the suspension will continue "until further notice." There were three return scheduled flights per week for the route, according to its website.

4:00 p.m. Japanese e-commerce group Rakuten says it will allow customers to donate their rewards points for humanitarian aid in Ukraine from today through March 31. The fundraising drive follows a personal donation from CEO Hiroshi Mikitani of 1 billion yen ($8.7 million). The company is also accepting donations through Rakuten credit cards and transfers to its subsidiary bank. "The funds raised this time will be used for humanitarian assistance such as the provision of supplies such as drinking water, the provision of health services, and the protection of children through the Ukrainian government and the Japan Committee for UNICEF," Rakuten said in a statement.

2:15 p.m. Australia issues a statement saying it is "holding Russian President Vladimir Putin to account for his egregious unjustified war against Ukraine." The statement says targeted sanctions and travel bans took effect at midnight against Putin and several high-ranking cabinet members. It notes that sanctioning a head of state is "exceedingly rare" and puts Putin in the company of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and Syria's Bashar al-Assad. Canberra also says it is giving $3 million to a NATO trust fund for nonlethal support for Ukraine, and that details of promised "lethal" aid will be forthcoming. The statement also stresses support for removing certain Russian banks

from the SWIFT system, and vows to "take complementary steps as required."

1:47 p.m. Australia's A$204 billion ($147 billion) sovereign wealth fund plans to wind down its exposure to Russian-listed companies, a spokesperson tells Reuters, joining a global financial backlash following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Future Fund, which has investments spread across global equities, debt, currency and infrastructure markets, says it has about 0.1% of its holdings, worth about A$200 million ($144 million), in companies listed on the Russian Stock Exchange.

12:55 p.m. The head of a Russian delegation to a virtual United Nations climate conference apologized for his country's invasion of Ukraine on Sunday, according to multiple reports. "Let me present an apology on behalf of all Russians not able to prevent this conflict," the official, Oleg Anisimov, was quoted as saying. He added that he could see no justification for the attack.

12:40 p.m. Australian Defense Minister Peter Dutton hits out at China for not using its influence to help stop the war. "This alliance that China and Russia have entered into should be deeply disturbing to the rest of the world," he tells Australia's Sky News. "There's one person now, there's one world leader that's standing out from the rest who are condemning President Putin and that is President Xi [Jinping]. And President Xi has the power and the relationship with President Putin to pick up the phone and to instruct him to pull back and to reconsider what is a dreadful, dreadful decision."

12:10 p.m. Russia's currency fell 40% on Monday morning after the U.S. and major European countries moved to

exclude the country's major banks from the SWIFT global payment system. The ruble declined to a record low of 117.75 to the dollar from 83.75 on Friday, according to Bloomberg data.

11:30 a.m. Google confirms it has temporarily disabled for Ukraine some Google Maps tools that provide live information about traffic conditions and how busy various locations are. The company says it took the action of globally disabling Google Maps' traffic layer and live information on how busy places like stores and restaurants are in Ukraine for the safety of local communities in the country.

7:35 a.m. In the latest European move toward financial decoupling with Russia, Norway's government says it will call on the country's oil fund to immediately freeze all Russian investments and ensure that it sells these holdings.

7:09 a.m. The International Chess Federation (FIDE) announces that it will not hold official competitions and events in Russia and Belarus, will not allow the use of Russian and Belarusian flags and national anthems at FIDE-rated international chess events, and will end sponsorship agreements with "any Belarusian and Russian sanctioned and/or state-controlled companies."

The federation says it "condemns any public statement from any member of the chess community which supports unjustified military action and brings the case of chess grandmasters Sergey Karjakin and Sergey Shipov to the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission," raising the possibility of penalizing them for supporting the invasion of Ukraine.

7:04 a.m. Aeroflot says it will cancel all flights to Europe, Reuters reports.

6:55 a.m. The Polish Football Association blasts international soccer governing body FIFA for not taking stronger action against Russia over Ukraine.

"If FIFA's Human Rights Policy is more than just words on a paper now is the time to put it into practice by excluding the Russian Football Association from the qualifiers for the World Cup in Qatar in 2022," writes Cezary Kulesza, president of the Polish association, in a statement.

FIFA's initial measures include forbidding international competitions from being held on Russian territory, with "home" matches being played on neutral territory and without spectators. Russia will compete under the name "Football Union of Russia," and the country's flag and national anthem cannot be used.

But "as a result of the brutal aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the war that continues there, we do not see any possibility of competing with the Russian national team in playoff matches for promotion to the World Cup in Qatar in 2022 regardless of the name of the team consisting of Russian footballers and the place of the match," Kulesza writes.

4:40 a.m. The White House is urging China to take a firmer stance against Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"This is not a time to stand on the sidelines," press secretary Jen Psaki tells MSNBC. "This is a time to be vocal and condemn the actions of President Putin and Russia in invading a sovereign country."

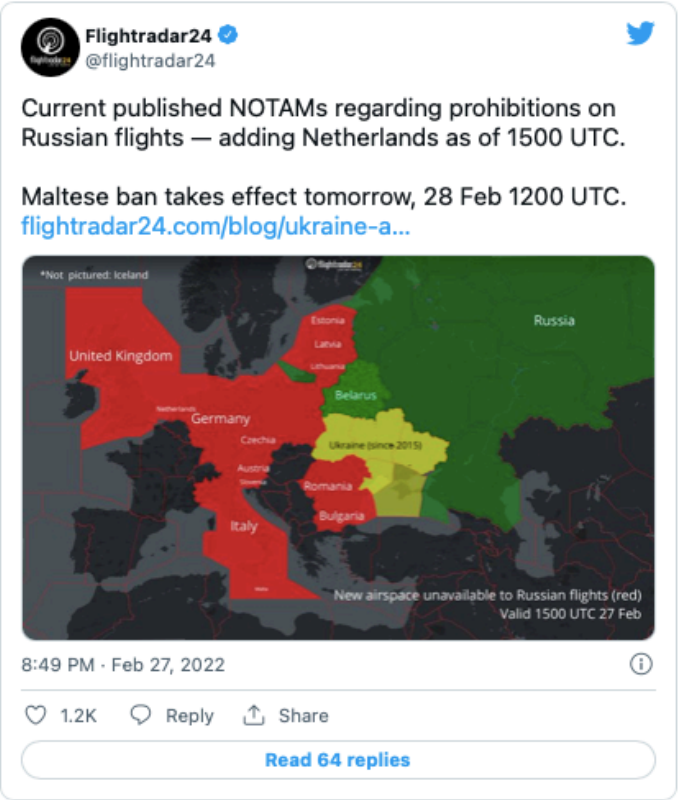
Meanwhile, U.S. and NATO officials have condemned Putin's order to put Russian nuclear forces on high alert.

2:56 a.m. BP says it will exit its 20% stake in Russian state oil company Rosneft. BP says it will no longer report reserves, production or profit from Rosneft, and its chief executive, Bernard Looney, will immediately resign the Rosneft board. Read more.

2:38 a.m. In a delayed statement, foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have expressed concern over the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but without condemning Moscow's move. Read more.

1:40 a.m. Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, says European Union airspace is shut down to Russian flights, including private jets of Russian oligarchs.

1:28 a.m. More European countries are closing their skies to Russian flights. Since this post by Flightradar24, Spain and Portugal have joined the list.



12:30 a.m. Talks between Russia and Ukraine have not yet begun, as the negotiators are just arriving at the venue, Interfax reports, citing the Russian Foreign Ministry.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that "all aircraft, helicopters and missiles" deployed in Belarus will remain on the ground during the talks, Interfax reports.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Makes a Statement in Kyiv on Feb. 27. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service via Reuters)

Tuesday, March 1

10: 40 p.m. The second round of Russia-Ukraine talks is planned for March 2, Russia's TASS news agency reports, quoting a source on the Russian side.

After the first round of negotiations produced no tangible results, the two sides had said they would meet again in the coming days.

6:30 p.m. An Indian student was killed when the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv was shelled on Tuesday, India's Ministry of External Affairs says.

5:50 p.m. YouTube is blocking channels connected to Russian state-backed media outlets RT and Sputnik across Europe, effective immediately, due to the situation in Ukraine, the company operated by Alphabet's Google, says. "It'll take time for our systems to fully ramp up. Our teams continue to monitor the situation around the clock to take swift action," a YouTube spokesperson says. The company's actions follows that of Facebook parent Meta, which on Monday said it will restrict access to television network RT and news agency Sputnik on its platforms across the European Union.

5:35 p.m. Human rights groups and Ukraine's ambassador to the U.S. accuse Russia of attacking Ukrainians with cluster bombs and vacuum bombs, weapons that have been condemned by a variety of international organizations. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch both said Russian forces appeared to have used widely banned cluster munitions. Oksana Markarova, Ukraine's ambassador to the United States, told reporters after meeting with members of the U.S. Congress that Russia had used a thermobaric

weapon, known as a vacuum bomb, in its invasion of her country.

A Volunteer Arranges Flags at the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, in 2014: the IOC Has Recommended Sports Federations Ban Russian and Belarusian Athletes and Officials From Upcoming Events After Russia Invaded Ukraine Last Week. © Reuters

2:40 p.m. The International Olympic Committee's executive board has recommended sports federations ban Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials from competing in events following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The IOC said the executive board made the decision "in order to protect the integrity of global sports competitions and for the safety of all the participants," and that the body was acting with a "heavy heart." The Russian Olympic Committee slammed the IOC decision, saying it "contradicts both the regulatory documents of the IOC and the [Olympic] Charter."

12:17 p.m. Mastercard says it has blocked multiple financial institutions from its payment network as a result of

sanctions imposed on Russia over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Taiwan Declares It Is in Sync With the International "Democratic Camp" as It Heeds Calls To Block Russian Banks From the SWIFT Global Payments System. © Reuters

11:08 a.m. Taiwan will join moves to block some Russian banks from the SWIFT international payments system, the government says, adding that it has sent humanitarian aid to Ukraine in a show of support for the international "democratic camp." As it joins many Western and other democracies in sanctioning Russia, Taiwan is also voicing sympathy for the Ukrainian people, drawing parallels with what it views as Beijing's threats against the island. Premier Su Tseng-chang told reporters Taiwan's sanctions decision was in lock-step with its democratic partners around the world, adding that the government will "cooperate" with what Western countries have decided regarding SWIFT.

9:30 a.m. Soccer's FIFA and UEFA have suspended Russia's national teams and clubs from international competitions, joining the governing bodies of other sports that have made similar moves in protest of Russia's military attack on Ukraine. It is now likely Russia will be excluded from this year's World Cup and the women's Euro 2022 tournament.

7:55 a.m. Turkey has warned all countries not to send warships through key passages to the Black Sea after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the country would take action based on a 1936 agreement to "stop escalation" in Ukraine. Read here.

6:44 a.m. A no-fly zone over Ukraine is "not a good idea," White House press secretary Jen Psaki says.

"What that would require is implementation by the U.S. military," Psaki says. "It would essentially mean the U.S. military would be shooting down planes -- Russian planes. That is definitely escalatory. That would potentially put us into a place where we're in ... a military conflict with Russia. That is not something the president wants to do."

"We are not going to have a military war with Russia with U.S. troops," she says.

6:33 a.m. Shell will exit its joint ventures with Gazprom, including a 27.5% percent stake in Sakhalin-2. Read here.

Russian Ambassador to the U.N. Vasily Nebenzya Attends a United Nations Security Council Meeting, Feb. 28. © Reuters

4:15 a.m. The U.S. has moved to expel a dozen Russian diplomats to the United Nations over national security concerns.

Russia's ambassador to the U.N., Vassily Nebenzia, tells reporters that the unidentified officials have been ordered to leave by March 7.

He describes the move as "sad news" and another demonstration of "gross disrespect" by the U.S. regarding its commitments as host of U.N. headquarters in New York.

The American side calls the 12 personnel "intelligence operatives from the Russian Mission who have abused their privileges of residency in the United States by engaging in espionage activities that are adverse to our national security."

"We are taking this action in accordance with the UN Headquarters Agreement," the U.S. statement says. "This action has been in development for several months."

3:36 a.m. Microsoft announces "new steps to reduce the exposure of Russian state propaganda, as well to ensure our own platforms do not inadvertently fund these operations."

"In accordance with the EU's recent decision, the Microsoft Start platform (including MSN.com) will not display any state-sponsored RT and Sputnik content," Microsoft President and Vice Chair Brad Smith writes. "We are removing RT news apps from our Windows app store and further de-ranking these sites' search results on Bing so that it will only return RT and Sputnik links when a user clearly intends to navigate to those pages. Finally, we are banning all advertisements from RT and Sputnik across our ad network and will not place any ads from our ad network on these sites."

3:21 a.m. Russia's central bank says Moscow's stock market will not open Tuesday, after it ordered the market to not to open on Monday.

2:00 a.m. Finland will send weapons and ammunition to Ukraine. The aid will consist of 2,500 assault rifles, 150,000 cartridges, 1,500 single-shot anti-tank weapons and 70,000 combat ration packages, according to the Finnish Ministry of Defense.

Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin And Defense Minister Antti Kaikkonen Announce Military Aid For Ukraine. © Reuters

1:35 a.m. The initial round of peace talks between Ukrainian and Russian officials ends, according to Russian sources. The talks will resume in the coming days after negotiators consult with leadership at their respective capitals, Kremlin aide Vladimir Medinsky says.

1:30 a.m. French President Emmanuel Macron asks Russian President Vladimir Putin by telephone to end attacks on Ukraine's civilians and residential areas, preserve civilian infrastructure, and secure main roads. Macron suggests staying in touch to prevent the situation from worsening, and Putin agrees.

12:50 a.m. Switzerland says it will adopt European Union sanctions against Russians involved in the invasion of Ukraine and freeze their assets.

The alpine country also adopts financial sanctions against President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

"Switzerland reaffirms its solidarity with Ukraine and its people; it will be delivering relief supplies for people who have fled to Poland," the government says.

12:20 a.m. The International Olympic Committee decides to strip President Vladimir Putin and other Russian government officials of the Olympic Order, the organization's highest award. The IOC also urges sports federations to exclude Russian athletes and officials from international competitions and announces a solidarity fund for Ukrainian athletes. The move follows an earlier call for sports bodies to remove competitions from Russia. The Paralympics are set to begin in Beijing on Friday.

Switzerland Faced Growing Pressure To Side Clearly With the West Against Moscow and Adopt Punitive Sanctions. © Reuters

Wednesday, March 2

11:10 p.m. Ukraine disputes Russia's claim that its forces had taken the port city of Kherson. Read here.

Meanwhile, other cities have seen districts turned to rubble by Russian missiles, Ukrainian authorities say. Among them are Zhytomyr, west of Kyiv. Two people were killed and 16 others, including children, injured in the attacks, authorities said Wednesday morning local time.

9:00 p.m. Japan will take in people fleeing Ukraine amid Russia's invasion and consider options to work around stringent coronavirus-related entry curbs, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida says.

While Tokyo looks to focus initially on those with family or friends in Japan, it will not limit entry to that group, Kishida said, adding that "we will respond from a humanitarian standpoint."

The move is noteworthy for a country that typically accepts refugees only in very small numbers.

8:30 p.m. Asked whether China would serve as a mediator, as Ukraine has requested, Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin tells reporters that Beijing has always supported and encouraged diplomatic efforts toward a peaceful settlement. He says China welcomes peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, and expresses hope that the two will continue with dialogue that takes both sides' legitimate security concerns into account.

China, he says, will continue to play a constructive role.

Kremlin Critic Alexey Navalny, Currently in Prison, Takes Part in a Rally in Moscow on Feb. 29, 2020. © Reuters

7:45 p.m. Jailed Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny has urged his compatriots to hold daily protests against the invasion of Ukraine, in a lengthy thread posted to his verified Twitter account.

Here's the full thread:

1/12 We - Russia - want to be a nation of peace. Alas, few people would call us that now.

2/12 But let's at least not become a nation of frightened silent people. Of cowards who pretend not to notice the aggressive war against Ukraine unleashed by our obviously insane czar.

3/12 I cannot, do not want and will not remain silent watching how pseudo-historical nonsense about the events of 100 years ago has become an excuse for Russians to kill Ukrainians, and for Ukrainians to kill Russians while defending themselves.

4/12 It's the third decade of the 21st century, and we are watching news about people burning down in tanks and bombed houses. We are watching real threats to start a nuclear war on our TVs.

5/12 I am from the USSR myself. I was born there. And the main phrase from there - from my childhood - was "fight for peace." I call on everyone to take to the streets and fight for peace.

6/12 Putin is not Russia. And if there is anything in Russia right now that you can be most proud of, it is those 6824 people who were detained because - without any call - they took to the streets with placards saying "No War."

7/12 They say that someone who cannot attend a rally and does not risk being arrested for it cannot call for it. I'm already in prison, so I think I can.

8/12 We cannot wait any longer. Wherever you are, in Russia, Belarus or on the other side of the planet, go to the

main square of your city every weekday and at 2 pm on weekends and holidays.

9/12 If you are abroad, come to the Russian embassy. If you can organise a demonstration, do so on the weekend. Yes, maybe only a few people will take to the streets on the first day. And in the second - even less.

10/12 But we must, gritting our teeth and overcoming fear, come out and demand an end to the war. Each arrested person must be replaced by two newcomers.

11/12 If in order to stop the war we have to fill prisons and paddy wagons with ourselves, we will fill prisons and paddy wagons with ourselves.

12/12 Everything has a price, and now, in the spring of 2022, we must pay this price. There's no one to do it for us. Let's not "be against the war." Let's fight against the war.

6:52 p.m. The European Union will impose additional sanctions on Russia by blocking seven of its banks from the SWIFT payment network

3:52 p.m. Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, Vice President William Lai and Premier Su Tseng-chang each will donate one month's salary to aid humanitarian relief efforts for Ukraine, which is standing its ground against a military invasion by Russia, the president said.

3:35 p.m. Sberbank, Russia's largest lender, is leaving the European market as its subsidiaries there face large cash outflows and what it says are threats to the safety of employees and property. The bank says it is no longer able to supply liquidity to European subsidiaries, following a

central bank order, but its capital level and asset quality are sufficient to pay all depositors. "The group's subsidiary banks have faced abnormal cash outflows and threats to the safety of its employees and branches," it said in a statement.

10:11 a.m. Exxon Mobil will exit Russia operations, including oil production fields, it announces on Tuesday, becoming the latest major Western energy company to quit the oil-rich country following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Read more.

10:00 a.m. Boeing says it has suspended operations in Russia and temporarily closed its office in Kyiv. The U.S.-based aircraft manufacturer will halt sales of spare parts and maintenance support for Russian airlines, which include national flag carrier Aeroflot and its fleet of Boeing 737s and 777s.

6:40 a.m. Apple pauses all product sales in Russia in response to the invasion of Ukraine.

"We are deeply concerned about the Russian invasion of Ukraine and stand with all of the people who are suffering as a result of the violence," Apple says in a statement. "We are supporting humanitarian efforts, providing aid for the unfolding refugee crisis, and doing all we can to support our teams in the region."

The company also says it stopped all exports into its sales channels in the country. Apple Pay and other services have been limited, the company says. Russian state media, RT News and Sputnik News, are no longer available for download from the Apple Store outside Russia.

6:00 a.m. Canada decides to shut its ports to Russian-owned ships later this week in response to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, Transport Minister Omar Alghabra says.

"Russia must be held accountable for its invasion of Ukraine," Alghabra said. "Today, we are taking steps to close Canadian waters and ports to Russian-owned or registered ships. We will continue to take action to stand with Ukraine," he added.

1:50 a.m. The European Union is preparing for "millions" more refugees fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine, EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson says.

Johansson says it was difficult to estimate precisely how many refugees could stream through EU borders after Russia invaded Ukraine last week, after more than 400,000 had come through so far.

"Unfortunately, we have to prepare for millions of people to come," Johansson tells a news conference in the Slovak capital Bratislava, an EU member that shares a border with Ukraine. "At the same time we have huge and urgent humanitarian needs in Ukraine, a lot of internally displaced people."

People Who Fled the Russian Invasion of Ukraine Check the Donated Goods at a Temporary Camp in Przemysl, Poland. © Reuters

12:20 a.m. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi speaks with his Ukraine counterpart Dmytro Kuleba on the phone, with the latter asking for mediation for a cease-fire, CCTV reports.

Wang did not give a clear response as to whether China would play a peace broker.

Thursday, March 3

6:12 p.m. Ukraine's defense lines were holding against the Russian attack, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says in his latest video, adding there had been no respite in Moscow's shelling of Ukraine since midnight.

Zelenskyy said Russia's changing tactics and shelling of civilians in cities proved Ukraine was successful in resisting Moscow's initial plan of claiming a quick victory through a land assault.

5:30 p.m. The U.K.'s Ministry of Defense tweeted an intelligence update that says Russia's long convoy heading to Kyiv has made little progress

- "The main body of the large Russian column advancing on Kyiv remains over 30km from the centre of the city having been delayed by staunch Ukrainian resistance, mechanical breakdown and congestion. The column has made little discernible progress in over three days."

- "Despite heavy Russian shelling, the cities of Kharkiv, Chernihiv and Mariupol remain in Ukrainian hands. Some Russian forces have entered the city of Kherson but the military situation remains unclear."

A Satellite Image Shows a Russian Military Convoy Near Chernihiv, Ukraine, on Feb, 28.

- "The Russian defence ministry has been forced to admit that 498 Russian soldiers have already been killed and 1,597 wounded in Putin's war. The actual number of those killed and wounded will almost certainly be considerably higher and will continue to rise."

5:13 p.m. Russian and Belarusian athletes will not be able to compete at the Winter Paralympics in Beijing, the International Paralympic Committee says, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine for which Belarus has been key staging area. The decision comes a day after the IPC gave athletes from the two countries the green light to participate as neutrals, saying that the governing body had followed its rules and that "athletes were not the aggressors." "Following a specially convened meeting, the IPC Governing Board has decided to refuse the athlete entries from the RPC and NPC Belarus for the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games," the IPC said.

2:28 p.m. Amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Quad leaders will hold a virtual meeting on Thursday. India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Joe Biden, Australia's Scott Morrison, and Japan's Fumio Kishida "will exchange views and assessments about important developments in the Indo-Pacific. ... The Quad leaders will also review ongoing efforts to implement the leaders' initiatives announced as part of the Quad's contemporary and positive agenda." The statement does not mention the exact timing of the meeting.

1:30 p.m. Amazon.com is using its logistics capabilities to deliver supplies to those in need, and its cybersecurity expertise to help governments and companies, as part of its support for Ukraine, Chief Executive Andy Jassy says on Twitter. "Amazon stands with the people of Ukraine, and will continue to help," Jassy said, following Russia's invasion, which Moscow calls a "special operation." Amazon, which earlier this week pledged to donate up to $10 million for humanitarian efforts, is the latest company to offer aid.

As Western Sanctions Continue To Rip Through Russia's Economy and Weaken its Currency, Two Ratings Agencies Have Lowered the Country's Sovereign Credit Rating by Six Notches. © Reuters

11:30 a.m. Fitch and Moody's have downgraded Russia's sovereign credit rating by six notches to "junk" status, saying Western sanctions have thrown into doubt Russia's ability to service its debt. Russia's financial markets have been thrown into turmoil by sanctions imposed over the country's invasion of Ukraine. S&P lowered Russia's rating to junk status last week. The invasion also prompted index providers FTSE Russell and MSCI to announce they will remove Russian equities from all their indexes. The statement came after a top MSCI executive called Russia's stock market "uninvestable."

10:20 a.m. Japan will freeze assets of four additional Russian banks, Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki says, bringing the total number to seven. The government did not disclose the name of the four banks.

10:00 a.m. The U.N. refugee agency says 1 million people have fled Ukraine since Russia's invasion less than a week ago, an exodus without precedent in this century for its speed. The tally from UNHCR amounts to more than 2% of Ukraine's population on the move in under a week. The World Bank counted the population at 44 million at the end of 2020. The U.N. agency has predicted that up to 4 million people could eventually leave Ukraine, but cautioned that even that projection could be revised upward.

A Local Militiaman Carries a Child as He Helps a Fleeing Family Across a Bridge Destroyed by Artillery on the Outskirts of Kyiv, Ukraine on March 2. © AP

8:02 a.m. The Kremlin says its forces have taken the port of Kherson, a southern provincial capital of around 250,000 people strategically placed where the Dnipro River flows into the Black Sea. Kyiv earlier denied this. Earlier, Kherson Mayor Igor Kolykhayev said Russian troops were in the streets and had forced their way into the city council building.

7:52 a.m. The Russian Defense Ministry acknowledges for the first time a substantial number of casualties in Ukraine, saying 498 Russian troops have died and 1,597 more have been injured.

Until now, the Russian side has been disclosed very little information about what it calls a "special military operation."

5:20 a.m. Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich has decided to sell the Chelsea football club after 19 years of

ownership, vowing to donate proceeds of the sale to victims of the war in Ukraine. Read here.

4:35 a.m. A Ukrainian delegation is headed for talks with Russia, Reuters reports, citing Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak.

3:52 a.m. The White House imposes more sanctions on Russia and adds penalties against Belarus in response to the Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. "The United States will take actions to hold Belarus accountable for enabling Putin's invasion of Ukraine, weaken the Russian defense sector and its military power for years to come, target Russia's most important sources of wealth, and ban Russian airlines from U.S. airspace," the White House says in a statement.

The new actions include: Restrictions on Belarus to choke off tech imports, sanctions on Russian defense entities, export controls targeting Russian oil refining, targeting entities supporting Russian and Belarusian militaries, and banning Russian aircraft from U.S. airspace.

2:30 a.m. Meanwhile, Russia continues to justify its actions.

"The Russian troops, the Russian army are on an honorable mission: to eliminate the real threat to Russia which until recently was emanating from Ukraine, from where, against the will of the Ukrainian people, NATO bases, nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles were to appear in the near future. Our Motherland will be protected," Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov is quote as saying by Interfax.

A View Shows Destroyed Buildings in a Residential Area of the Ukrainian City of Zhytomyr. (Ukrainian State Emergency Service via Reuters)

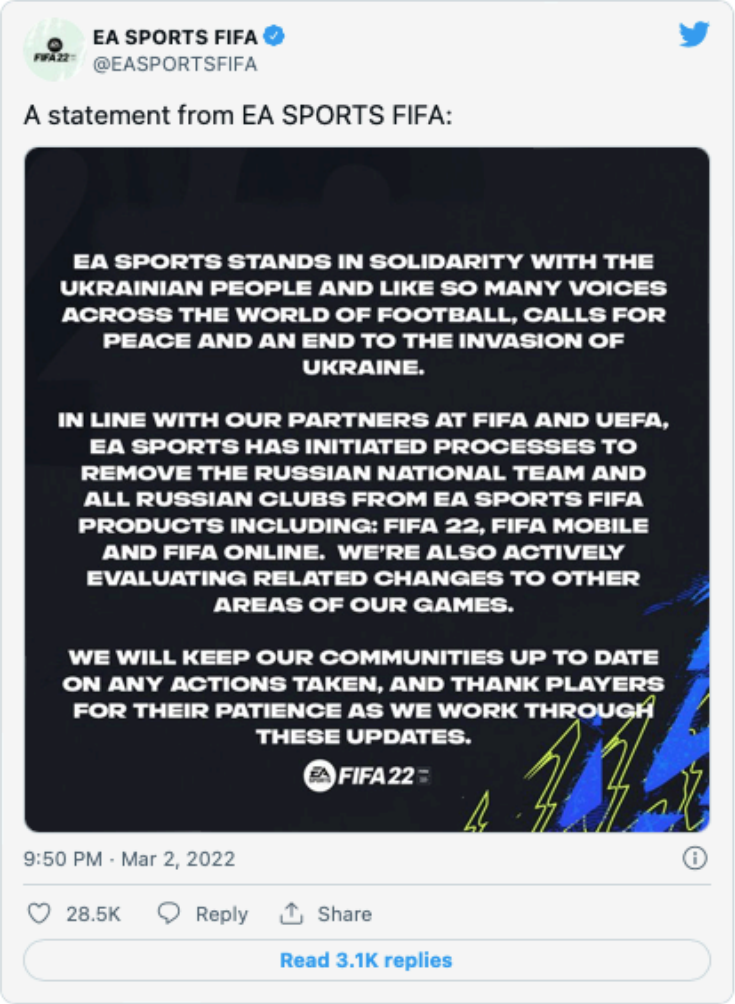
2:15 a.m. The United Nations General Assembly has overwhelming adopted a resolution calling on Russian forces to leave Ukraine.

The resolution was supported by 141 member states. Russia, Belarus and three other countries voted against it. China and India were among the 35 member states to abstain.

2:00 a.m. Russia has told the International Atomic Energy Agency that Russian forces have taken control of the area around Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, according to a statement by IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi.

The Russian side says that staff at the plant have continued to "work on providing nuclear safety and monitoring radiation in normal mode of operation," and that "the radiation levels remain normal," according to the statement.

1:40 a.m. Russia's growing isolation from the world of sports has extended to video games. EA Sports, publisher of the FIFA soccer game series, says it will remove the Russian national team and Russian clubs.



12:30 a.m. Toyota Motor will suspend auto production in Russia from Friday as it struggles to source parts from overseas. Read here.

Friday, March 4

11:48 p.m. Ukraine's central bank governor calls on the U.S. and the European Union to freeze the assets of all Russian banks within their jurisdiction.

"We urge you to take decisions that will help in the international fight against terrorist financing," Shevchenko said in a statement.

6:17 p.m. Russia's defense ministry blames an attack at the site of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine on Ukrainian saboteurs, calling it a monstrous provocation. Ukraine has said Russian forces attacked the plant in the early hours of Friday, setting an adjacent five-story training facility on fire.

A Russian defense ministry spokesman said the nuclear plant was operating normally and the area had been under Russian control since Feb. 28. "However, last night on the territory adjacent to the power plant, an attempt was made by the Kyiv nationalist regime to carry out a monstrous provocation," spokesman Igor Konashenkov was quoted as saying.

5:55 p.m. Russia's parliament has passed a law imposing prison terms of up to 15 years for spreading intentionally "fake" information about the armed forces as Moscow fights back in what it casts as an information war over the conflict in Ukraine. Russian officials have repeatedly said that false information has been spread by Russia's enemies such as the United States and its allies in an attempt to sow discord and divide its people.

4:50 p.m. The New Development Bank established by the BRICS group of emerging nations says it has put new transactions in Russia on hold. "In light of unfolding uncertainties and restrictions, NDB has put new transactions in Russia on hold. NDB will continue to conduct business in full conformity with the highest compliance standards as an international institution," it said in a statement posted on its website. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa -- known together as BRICS -- are members of the NDB.

4:31 p.m. China's foreign ministry has urged all sides to ensure the safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, after a fire broke out in a building adjacent to a nuclear plant there during intense fighting. "We will monitor the situation and call on all sides to exercise restraint, avoid escalation and ensure the safety of relevant nuclear facilities," Wang Wenbin, ministry spokesman, said at a daily briefing.

3:50 p.m. Russian military forces have seized the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant -- Europe's largest -- in Ukraine's southeast, the regional state administration says. "Operational personnel are monitoring the condition of power units," it said on social media, quoting the Ukrainian nuclear inspectorate. It also said efforts were being made to ensure the operations were in line with safety requirements.

2:24 p.m. Russia's communications watchdog has restricted access to the Russian-language websites of the BBC and Radio Liberty for spreading what it cast as false information about the conflict in Ukraine.

1:14 p.m. Home rental company Airbnb is suspending all operations in Russia and Belarus, CEO Brian Chesky says in a tweet.

11:46 a.m. U.S. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm says the reactors at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station "are protected by robust containment structures and reactors are being safely shut down." Granholm said on Twitter she had just spoken with Ukraine's energy minister about the situation at the plant, where a fire broke out during fighting between Russian and Ukrainian forces. "We have seen no elevated radiation readings near the facility," Granholm said.

Alphabet's Google Has Stopped Selling Online Advertising in Russia, the Company Said on March 4, "in Light of the Extraordinary Circumstances" in Ukraine. © Reuters

10:09 a.m. Alphabet's Google says it has stopped selling online advertising in Russia, a ban that covers search, YouTube and outside publishing partners. The move by the world's top seller of online ads by revenue follows similar pauses in Russia by Twitter and Snap following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "In light of the extraordinary circumstances, we're pausing Google ads in Russia," the company said in a statement. "The situation is evolving

quickly, and we will continue to share updates when appropriate."

9:40 a.m. A spokesman for Europe's largest nuclear plant says the facility is on fire after Russia attacked the power station in the southern Ukrainian city of Enerhodar. A government official tells The Associated Press elevated levels of radiation are being detected near the site of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, which provides about 25% of the country's power generation. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the information has not yet been publicly released.

An Exterior View of the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant Is Seen in Enerhodar, Eastern Ukraine in 2008. A Fire Broke Out in a Training Building Outside the Facility During Intense Fighting Between Russian and Ukrainian Forces, Ukraine's State Emergency Service Said. © Reuters

4:48 a.m. U.S. prosecutors charge a TV producer for Konstantin Malofeyev, described as a Russian oligarch, with violating Crimea-related sanctions. John Hanick, a U.S. citizen, was arrested in February in London, and the U.S. is

seeking his extradition. Malofeyev is closely tied to Russian aggression in Ukraine, prosecutors say in a statement. Malofeyev owns Tsargrad TV, a Christian Orthodox television channel, according to Reuters.

4:40 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden says Russia is firing indiscriminately in Ukraine as the U.S. announces additional sanctions to clamp down on Putin and people around him. "The United States will also impose visa restrictions on 19 oligarchs and 47 of their family members and close associates," the White House says in a statement.

4:14 a.m. International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi urges Russian and Ukrainian troops to stop fighting in Enerhodar, Ukraine, which is just a few kilometers away from the country's largest nuclear power plant.

4:02 a.m. Officials in the southeastern Ukrainian port city of Mariupol say they are "being destroyed," with Russia forces knocking out power, water and heating supplies as they bombard the city with heavy shelling. "Mariupol remains under fire. Women, children and the elderly are suffering. We are being destroyed as a nation. This is genocide of the Ukrainian people," the city's council said in a statement.

Hundreds of People Fleeing From the Russian Invasion of Ukraine Arrive at a Train Station in Poland. © Reuters

3:17 a.m. Ukraine says a tentative agreement with Russia organizes safe corridors for civilian evacuations and the delivery of humanitarian supplies. Cease-fires would be observed in the affected areas, says Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak, who took part in the talks in Belarus.

2:30 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin says on television that the military operation in Ukraine is proceeding according to plan and that its soldiers are heroes.

Without evidence, he accuses Ukrainian forces of holding foreigners hostage and using human shields.

2:15 a.m. Ukrainian and Russian peace negotiators begin their second round of talks.

12:54 a.m. Canada will remove most-favored-nation status for Russia and Belarus as trading partners and provide additional lethal aid to Ukraine including rocket launchers and hand grenades.

The two countries join only North Korea in lacking that status. Goods from Russia and Belarus will be subjected to a 35% tariff when imported into Canada, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland said.

12:05 a.m. The China-backed Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank announces that "all activities relating to Russia and Belarus are on hold and under review," citing Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Read here

"As the war in Ukraine unfolds, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) extends its thoughts and sympathy to everyone affected. Our hearts go out to all who are suffering," a statement posted on the Beijing-based lender's website reads.

For an institution closely linked to the Chinese government, referring to the conflict as a "war" is rare.

China Is the Largest Shareholder of the Multilateral Development Lender. © Reuters

Saturday, March 5

11:44 p.m. What looked like a breakthrough cease-fire to evacuate residents from two cities in Ukraine quickly falls apart as Ukrainian officials said shelling had halted the work to remove civilians hours after Russia announced the deal, according to AP.

11:30 a.m. Samsung Electronics says shipments to Russia have been suspended "due to current geopolitical developments." A statement from the company reads, "We continue to actively monitor this complex situation to determine our next steps." Samsung Electronics' handsets are the top seller in Russia, with a 30% share of the market as of the fourth quarter of 2021. Samsung is also donating $6 million, including $1 million in consumer electronics as well as voluntary donations from employees, to actively support humanitarian efforts "around the region," including aid for refugees.

11:00 a.m. Credit rating agency S&P has cut Belarus' rating to "CCC" from "B," meaning its sovereign debt is "vulnerable," and placed it on negative due to the country's involvement in Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "International sanctions imposed on Belarus due to its involvement in Russia's military intervention against Ukraine are severe, and we expect them to tighten further," the agency said. MSCI, which ranks companies and countries on their environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance, earlier this week downgraded Russia and Belarus in response to their war on Ukraine.

8:00 a.m. Russia says Meta Platforms' Facebook has been blocked for restricting state-backed channels. Nick Clegg, Meta's head of global affairs says the company will do

everything possible to restore services. The move came after the tussle between Russia and Western companies escalated on Friday as Moscow blocked a slew of media companies, and big brands like Microsoft and Electronic Arts announced they were shutting down sales in the country.

A police officer in Moscow: A "fake news" law in Russia has raised concerns among Western media. © Reuters

7:14 a.m. CNN will stop broadcasting in Russia "while we continue to evaluate the situation and our next steps moving forward," a spokesperson says.

Bloomberg will temporarily suspend newsgathering there, with its editor-in-chief saying a change to the criminal code "makes it impossible to continue any semblance of normal journalism inside the country." Those who spread "fake news" about the military can be imprisoned for 15 years under the law.

The two U.S. media companies follow the BBC, which announced a similar move earlier.

6:39 a.m. S&P Dow Jones Indices, home to the Dow Jones Industrial Average and the S&P 500, says it will remove all stocks listed and/or domiciled in Russia from its standard equity indexes at a price of zero.

It will also change the country's classification from an emerging market to stand-alone, "given the deterioration in the level of accessibility of the Russian market," the company announces.

5:00 a.m. The BBC says it is temporarily suspending its reporting in Russia in response to a new law that BBC Director-General Tim Davie said "appears to criminalize the process of independent journalism."

"The safety of our staff is paramount and we are not prepared to expose them to the risk of criminal prosecution simply for doing their jobs," Davie says.

Access to the BBC has been restricted in Russia, along with other media outlets authorities say are "publishing unreliable information about the special military operation in Ukraine," TASS reports, using Moscow's name for the war. Others include Meduza, the Voice of America, Radio Liberty and Deutsche Welle.

3:30 a.m. Foreign ministers from seven leading industrial nations call on Moscow to stop attacks close to Ukraine's nuclear power plants, saying "any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of international law."

The top diplomats from the Group of Seven also say in a statement released by the U.S. State Department that the nations are prepared to impose further sanctions on Russia and Belarus. "We wish to make clear to the Russian and Belarusian people that the severe sanctions imposed on Russia and Belarus are a consequence of and clear reaction to President Putin's unprovoked and unjustifiable war against Ukraine," the statement says.

They also condemn Russian attacks on civilians as well as schools and hospitals.

2:40 a.m. NATO has rejected a Ukrainian call for a no-fly zone over the war-torn country, but a U.S. defense official says the Ukrainian air force is still largely intact.

"The Ukrainians still have a significant majority of their air combat power available to them, both fixed-wing and rotary wing as well as unmanned systems and surface-to-air systems," Reuters quotes the official as saying. The official spoke on condition of anonymity.

2:15 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has told Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan he is "grateful to Turkey for the consistent support," Zelenskyy says on Twitter. He also says he spoke with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi.

Meanwhile, Interfax reports that Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu spoke with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, telling him Russian troops in Ukraine have created corridors for the civilian population in the areas where they hold control.

Sunday, March 6

11:12 p.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will meet with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on Tuesday to coordinate the response to the Russian assault on Ukraine, a U.S. State Department spokesperson says.

11:00 p.m. Russian shelling prevents evacuation of civilians from the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, local authorities say. The shelling continues despite a temporary cease-fire agreement.

9:35 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin warns Ukraine that Russia's military operation would only be halted if Kyiv stops resisting and fulfills all of the Kremlin's demands.

"It is hoped that during the planned next round of negotiations, Ukraine's representatives will show a more constructive approach, fully taking into account the emerging realities," the Kremlin says in a readout of a call with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan.

4:22 p.m. South Korea will implement export controls against Belarus for "effectively supporting the Russian invasion of Ukraine," Seoul's foreign ministry says. The ministry did not detail what measures would be taken, but says they will be applied in a similar way to moves already taken by South Korea against Russia. It condemned Moscow as having launched an "armed invasion" of Ukraine.

9:35 a.m. U.S. payments firms Visa and Mastercard are suspending operations in Russia over the invasion of Ukraine, and they will work with clients and partners to cease all transactions there.

7:52 a.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken speaks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi about "Moscow's premeditated, unprovoked, and unjustified war against Ukraine," a U.S. State Department spokesperson says.

7:50 a.m. Ukraine's leader makes a "desperate" plea to American lawmakers for the U.S. to help get more warplanes to his military and cut off Russian oil imports as Kyiv tries to stave off the Russian invasion.

5:29 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin warns that Ukrainian statehood is in jeopardy and likened the West's sanctions on Russia to "declaring war," in a televised meeting with flight attendants from Russian airline Aeroflot.

Ukrainian and Russian flags are seen on a table before the talks between officials of the two countries in the Brest region, Belarus, on March 3. (Handout photo from BelTA) © Reuters

2:45 a.m. Russia and Ukraine will hold a third round of talks on Monday about ending hostilities, Ukrainian

negotiator David Arakhamia said in a Facebook post on Saturday, without providing further details, according to Reuters.

Monday, March 7

11:55 p.m. Moscow approves a list of foreign states and territories that committed "unfriendly actions" against Russia, its companies and its citizens, state news agency Tass reports. The list includes Ukraine, Japan, the U.S., Canada, European Union states, the U.K., South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Taiwan.

The decree, following international sanctions against Russia, lets the country's citizens, companies and government entities use rubles to pay foreign exchange obligations to foreign creditors in those regions.

11:50 p.m. A third round of talks between Ukrainian and Russian officials has begun, Interfax reports.

In a Twitter post ahead of talks, Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak urged the Russia to prove its commitment to halting widespread attacks on civilians.

8:35 p.m. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov are set to meet during a diplomacy forum in Turkey's Antalya on Thursday, according to Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. The Turkish minister says he will attend the meeting.

8:30 p.m. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has "suggested" to Russian President Vladimir Putin that "a direct conversation" between the Russian leader and his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, "may greatly assist the ongoing peace efforts."

Narendra Modi and Vladimir Putin in 2019: in a Phone Call, the Indian Leader Told his Russian Counterpart That Direct Talks With Ukraine's President Zelenskyy "May Greatly Assist the Ongoing Peace Efforts." © Reuters

An Indian government statement about their phone call said Putin "briefed" Modi on the status of negotiations between the Ukrainian and Russian teams. It added that Modi welcomed the talks and hoped they would lead to a cessation of the conflict.

The statement said the Russian president also "briefed [the] prime minister about the ongoing measures related to humanitarian corridors for facilitating evacuation of civilians, including Indian students [stuck in Ukraine]."

5:40 p.m. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi says that relations with Russia are "rock-solid" as he repeated calls for dialogue to end the war in Ukraine. China's top diplomat does not directly address questions about calls from his Ukrainian counterpart for Beijing to broker a cease-fire between Moscow and Kyiv, and there was little sign that

Beijing was changing its cautious stance on the bloody conflict.

5:16 p.m. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Monday who has briefed him "in detail about the conflict situation and the ongoing negotiations between Ukraine and Russia," according to an Indian government statement. On his part, Modi expressed "deep concern about the ongoing conflict and resultant humanitarian crisis" and reiterated his call for "immediate cessation of violence."

3:30 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says its military will hold fire and open humanitarian corridors in several Ukrainian cities on Monday. During the weekend, fighting stymied evacuation efforts, and civilian casualties mounted. The corridors will open at 10 a.m. Moscow time. They will lead from the capital Kyiv, Kharkiv, Mariupol and Sumy, and are being set up at the personal request of French President Emmanuel Macron, the ministry says. "Attempts by the Ukrainian side to deceive Russia and the whole civilized world ... are useless this time," the ministry adds.

2:39 p.m. Australia will construct a nuclear submarine base in the east of the country, Prime Minister Scott Morrison says. The project, estimated to cost more than 10 billion Australian dollars ($7.4 billion), is aimed at enhancing the country's defense and checking China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific region. The announcement also came in the shadow of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which Morrison framed as part of a larger "assault" by autocracies against the rules-based international order.

2:11 p.m. Japan has raised its travel alert for Russia to its second-highest level to warn against all trips there, as

additional sanctions over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine have left far fewer flights available and have begun seriously disrupting the local economy and citizens' lives. Japan's foreign ministry lifted its risk warning to Level 3 on its four-point scale, after European countries and the United States closed off their airspace to Russian flights while Russia shut its airspace in retaliation.

12:20 p.m. Japan's Nikkei share average plunges more than 3% to a fresh 15-month low, as the war in Ukraine shows no signs of abating, pushing up oil and other commodity prices and stoking fears of a stagflationary shock to the global economy.

11:30 a.m. Palladium jumps to a record high, while gold hits the key level of $2,000 per ounce, as concerns over the Russia-Ukraine conflict pushed investors toward haven assets.

9:25 a.m. U.S. gasoline prices at the pump jumped 11% over the past week to their highest since late July 2008 as global sanctions cripple Russia's ability to export crude oil, according to automobile club AAA. The average price for U.S. regular gasoline hit $4.00 per gallon on Sunday, up 11% from $3.60 a week ago and up 45% from $2.76 a year ago, AAA said.

9:12 a.m. Oil prices soar more than 10% in hectic trading as the risk of a U.S. and European ban on Russian products and delays in Iranian talks triggered what was shaping up as a major stagflationary shock for world markets.

KPMG and PwC Say They Will Leave Russia due to the Country's Invasion of Ukraine. © Reuters

7:46 a.m. Accounting firm KPMG says it will leave Russia and Belarus, its announcement coming soon after PwC declared its intent to leave Russia. "We believe we have a responsibility, along with other global businesses, to respond to the Russian government's ongoing military attack on Ukraine. As a result, our Russia and Belarus firms will leave the KPMG network," the firm said in its news release.

6:37 a.m. PwC has severed ties with its Russian businesses, making it the first of the Big Four accounting firms to exit the country since Ukraine was invaded, the Financial Times reports. The firm has some 3,700 partners and staff in Russia across 11 locations. PwC's Russian operations will carry on as a stand-alone firm but with no formal connection to the global brand.

5:51 a.m. Netflix and TikTok announce suspensions to their respective services in Russia. Netflix's decision cites

"circumstances on the ground," while TikTok says it will halt livestreaming as well as video uploads to its platform in the country. TikTok, a Chinese-owned social media company, adds it is reviewing "the safety implications" of a media law signed on Friday by President Vladimir Putin imposing jail terms of up to 15 years for spreading what Moscow calls "fake news."

2:15 a.m. Russia's sovereign bond payments to nonresidents will depend on sanctions imposed by the West, the country's finance ministry says.

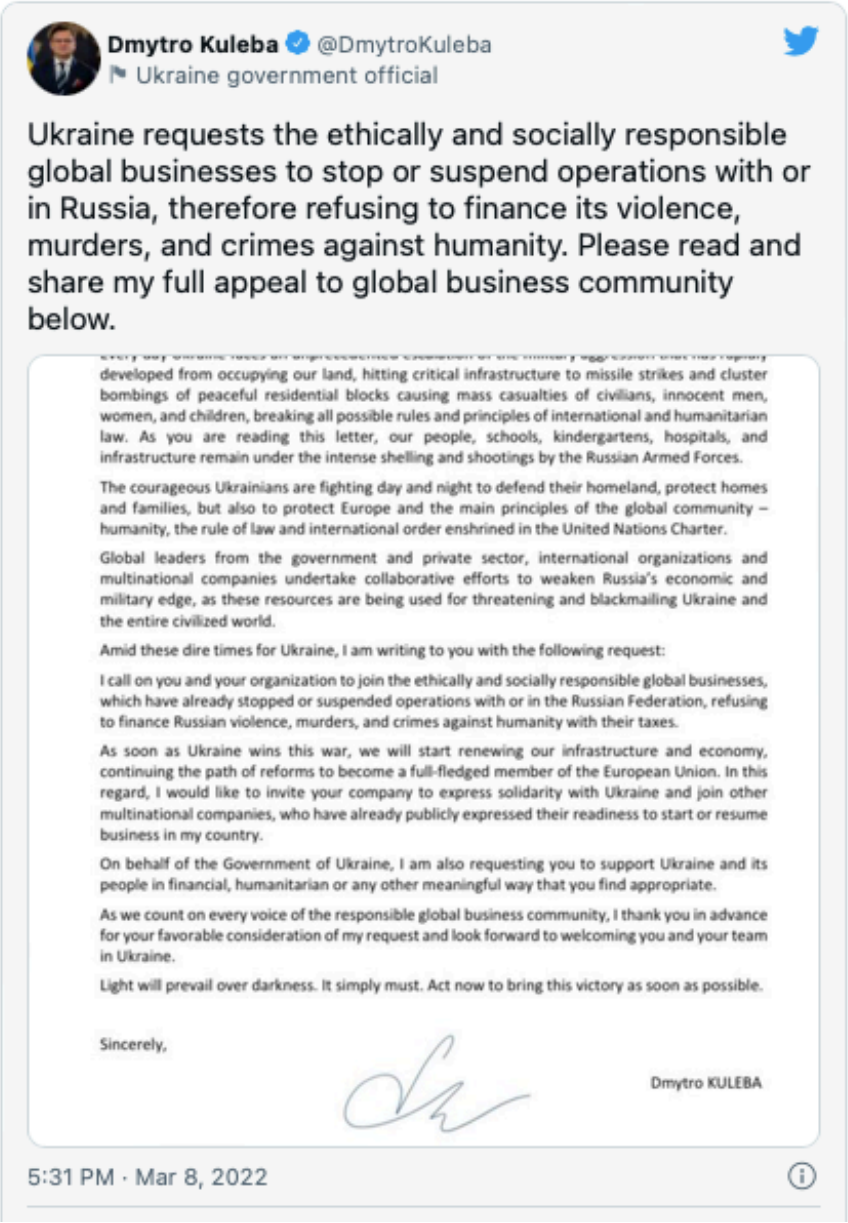
Russia will use rubles to make payments to residents on bonds denominated in foreign currency, according to the ministry.

12:21 a.m. Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, at least 364 civilians are confirmed to have been killed in the country and another 759 wounded, according to the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights. The figures comprise casualties through Saturday and are probably "considerably higher," the monitoring mission reports.

A Building Damaged by Recent Shelling in Kharkiv, Ukraine. © Reuter

Tuesday, March 8

9:00 p.m. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba in his latest tweet is asking global businesses to stop supporting Russia financially. "Ukraine requests the ethically and socially responsible global businesses to stop or suspend operations with or in Russia, therefore refusing to finance its violence, murders, and crimes against humanity," Kuleba says in the twitter account of the ministry where he attached his full appeal to the global business community.



Dmytro Kuleba @DmytroKuleba
Ukraine government official

Ukraine requests the ethically and socially responsible global businesses to stop or suspend operations with or in Russia, therefore refusing to finance its violence, murders, and crimes against humanity. Please read and share my full appeal to global business community below.

developed from occupying our land, hitting critical infrastructure to missile strikes and cluster bombings of peaceful residential blocks causing mass casualties of civilians, innocent men, women, and children, breaking all possible rules and principles of international and humanitarian law. As you are reading this letter, our people, schools, kindergartens, hospitals, and infrastructure remain under the intense shelling and shootings by the Russian Armed Forces.

The courageous Ukrainians are fighting day and night to defend their homeland, protect homes and families, but also to protect Europe and the main principles of the global community – humanity, the rule of law and international order enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

Global leaders from the government and private sector, international organizations and multinational companies undertake collaborative efforts to weaken Russia's economic and military edge, as these resources are being used for threatening and blackmailing Ukraine and the entire civilized world.

Amid these dire times for Ukraine, I am writing to you with the following request:

I call on you and your organization to join the ethically and socially responsible global businesses, which have already stopped or suspended operations with or in the Russian Federation, refusing to finance Russian violence, murders, and crimes against humanity with their taxes.

As soon as Ukraine wins this war, we will start renewing our infrastructure and economy, continuing the path of reforms to become a full-fledged member of the European Union. In this regard, I would like to invite your company to express solidarity with Ukraine and join other multinational companies, who have already publicly expressed their readiness to start or resume business in my country.

On behalf of the Government of Ukraine, I am also requesting you to support Ukraine and its people in financial, humanitarian or any other meaningful way that you find appropriate.

As we count on every voice of the responsible global business community, I thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of my request and look forward to welcoming you and your team in Ukraine.

Light will prevail over darkness. It simply must. Act now to bring this victory as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Dmytro KULEBA

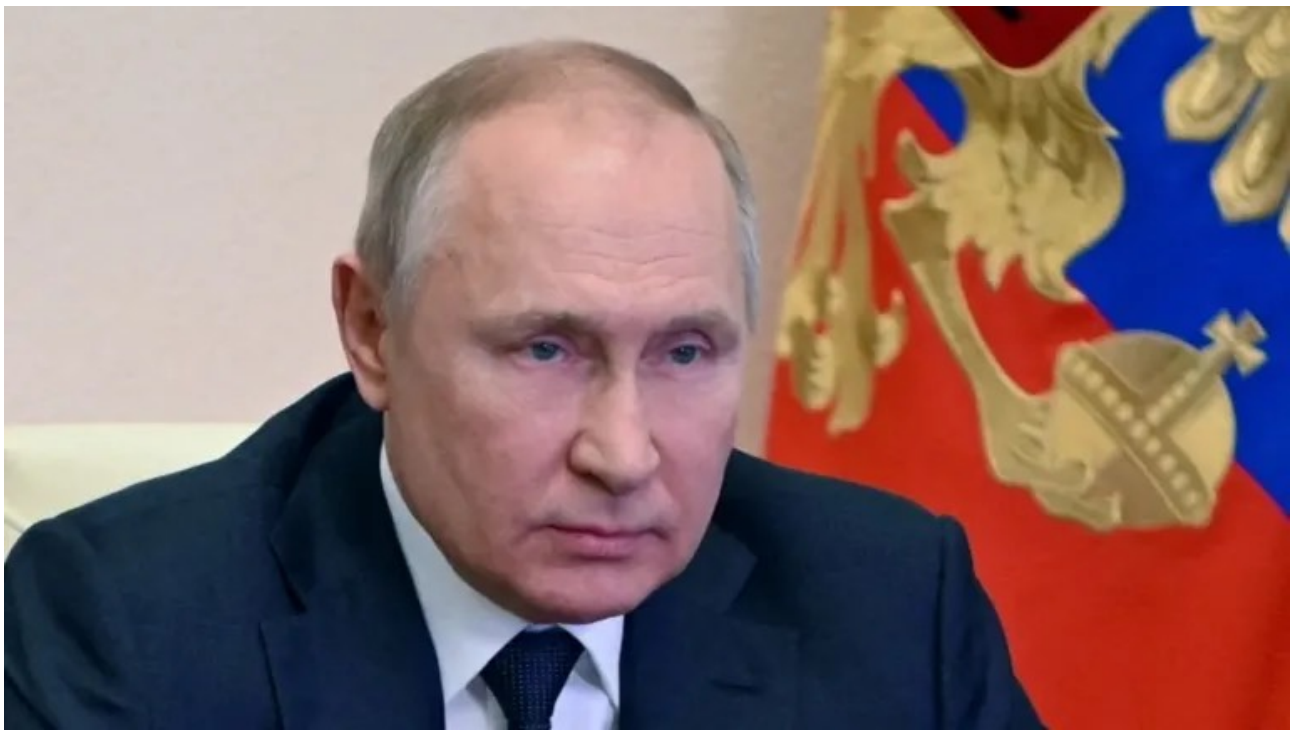
5:31 PM · Mar 8, 2022

Ukraine requests the ethically and socially responsible global businesses to stop or suspend operations with or in Russia, therefore refusing to finance its violence, murders, and crimes against humanity. Please read and share my full appeal to global business community below.

8:47 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Parolin have spoken on the phone and expressed "hope for the next round of talks between Moscow and Kyiv soon and an agreement on the key issues lying in the center of the Ukrainian crisis in order to settle it and cease hostilities," Interfax reports, citing the Russian foreign ministry. The latest round of talks between Russia and Ukraine on Monday reportedly ended with no significant results.

8:40 p.m. The advance of Russian forces in Ukraine has slowed significantly and Ukrainian forces are counterattacking in some areas, Reuters reports citing Ukrainian presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovych.

8:30 p.m. Chinese President Xi Jinping calls for "maximum restraint" in Ukraine and said China is "pained to see the flames of war reignited in Europe," Reuters reports, citing state broadcaster CCTV, in his strongest statement to date on Russia's invasion. Speaking at a virtual meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Xi said the three countries should jointly support peace talks between Russia and Ukraine.



Thirteen Days Into President Vladimir Putin's Invasion of Ukraine, a Foreign Ministry Official Was Cited by Interfax as Saying That Moscow Was Ready To Hold a Dialogue With the U.S. And That "It Would Do Well To Remember the Well-Forgotten Principle That Worked During the Cold War, Peaceful Co-Existence." © Reuters

6:58 p.m. Moscow is ready for dialogue with the U.S. and expects that its relationship with Washington to return to normal, according to an Interfax report citing Alexander Darchiyev, director of the North America Department at the Russian Foreign Ministry.

"We are open for an honest and mutually respectful dialogue to the same extent as the U.S. will be ready for it," Darchiyev says, adding, "it would do well to remember the well-forgotten principle that worked during the Cold War, peaceful co-existence, despite the values and ideals separating us which must not be forced on each other."

6:43 p.m. Ukrainian officials say the evacuation of residents has begun in the northeastern city of Sumy which is under siege by the Russian military. It is the first time since Russia invaded Ukraine that people are being evacuated through so-called humanitarian corridors where

fighting is ongoing. Evacuations have also begun in Irpin, near Kyiv.

Residents Of The Town Of Irpin, Near Kyiv, Evacuate On March 7. (Agencja Wyborcza.Pl Via Reuters)

5:02 p.m. The Japanese credit card company JCB announces that it is halting payment transactions in Russia from March 14, moving in line with major U.S. credit card companies that have already suspended operations to squeeze Russia out of international banking.

4:50 p.m. Russia has opened "humanitarian corridors" so people can be evacuated from Kyiv and four other Ukrainian cities -- Cherhihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv and Mariupol -- the Interfax news agency quotes Russia's defense ministry as saying. The ministry adds that Russian forces in Ukraine introduced a "silent regime" to ensure civilians' safety from 07:00 GMT, Interfax reports.

3:00 p.m. Japan will ban exports of oil refining equipment to Russia and dual-use products to Belarus as it expands

sanctions over the invasion of Ukraine, the top government spokesman says. A total of 32 Russian and Belarusian individuals, including government officials and business magnates, along with 12 entities, including military-related companies, have been added to the list of those facing asset freezes in Japan.

A Pipe Is Checked at Lukoil's Imilorskoye Oil Field Outside the West Siberian City of Kogalym on Jan. 25, 2016. © Reuters

12:20 p.m. Viva Energy, one of Australia's two refiners, says it will stop buying Russian crude oil, joining a growing number of companies to sever trade ties with the country over its invasion of Ukraine. The fuel supplier, which operates in Australia under the Shell brand, says it is "appalled" by the events in Ukraine as Russia continues its incursion. A spokesperson for Ampol, Australia's only other refiner, says the company has not bought Russian crude oil or products since the conflict started.

11:41 a.m. Fitch becomes the second major credit rating agency, following Moody's, to suspend its commercial

operations in Russia with immediate effect on Monday, saying its analysts outside the country will provide its coverage instead. Ratings companies are concerned about a new law passed in Russia last week that threatens prison terms of up to 15 years for spreading what the Russian government describes as "fake" information.

8:10 a.m. OPEC has no control over the events that have led to higher global oil prices, and there is not enough capacity to compensate for the loss of Russian supply, OPEC Secretary-General Mohammad Barkindo says. Russia is the world's top exporter of crude and fuel, shipping around 7 million barrels per day, or 7% of global supplies. "There is no capacity in the world that could replace 7 millions barrels per day," Barkindo tells reporters at an industry conference in Houston.

5:40 a.m. Russia may respond to European sanctions by halting the flow of natural gas through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, says Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak, according to Interfax. No decision has been made yet, Novak adds.

Negotiators From Ukraine, Left, and Russia Meet in Belarus' Belavezhskaya Pushcha National Park, North of Brest, on March 7. (BelTA Pool Photo via AP)

3:30 a.m. Russian negotiators say they have no positive developments to report following talks with Ukraine and warn against expecting the next round to bring a final result. The talks "are not easy," negotiator Vladimir Medinsky said. Ukraine negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak says that some small progress was made over logistics for the evacuation of civilians but that no agreement that significantly improves the broader situation was reached.

12:55 a.m. Ukrainian officials say a bread factory has been hit by a Russian airstrike, Reuters reports. The bodies of at least 13 civilians were recovered from rubble after the factory in Makariv, west of Kyiv, was hit.

12:20 a.m. Japanese apparel chain Uniqlo plans to continue selling clothes at its 50 locations in Russia, with Tadashi Yanai, CEO of parent Fast Retailing, saying Russian people need access to daily necessities.

"Clothing is a necessity of life," Yanai says. "The people of Russia have the same right to live as we do." Read more.

Wednesday, March 9

10:39 p.m. Britain plans to supply Ukraine with anti-aircraft missiles to help it defend its skies from Russian invasion, Defense Minister Ben Wallace tells Parliament, noting that the technology falls within the definition of defensive weapons.

9:32 p.m. Russia must prioritize grain supplies to domestic bakeries over export markets, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said. According to Reuters, he also unveiled fresh measures to support the domestic economy in the face of international sanctions over Ukraine.

9:20 p.m. The European Union has agreed to impose sanctions on 160 more Russian individuals, including 14 oligarchs and prominent businesspeople, and freeze transactions with the Belarus central bank related to the management of reserves or assets, the EU Commission says.

The new sanctions include restricted provision of SWIFT services to Belagroprombank, Bank Dabrabyt and the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus, as well as their Belarusian subsidiaries.

The New Safe Confinement Arch Over Reactor 4 at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in December 2019. A Power Outage to the Plant Opens Up the Risk of Radiation Leaks in the Next 48 Hours. © Getty Images

9:13 p.m. Radioactive substances could be released from Ukraine's infamous Chernobyl nuclear power plant because it cannot cool spent nuclear fuel after its power connection was severed, Ukraine's state-run nuclear company Energoatom says.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba also tweeted that the "reserve diesel generators have a 48-hour capacity to power the Chornobyl NPP." Once that capacity is exhausted, "cooling systems of the storage facility for spent nuclear fuel will stop, making radiation leaks imminent."

twitter:https://twitter.com/DmytroKuleba/status/1501531432031858690

7:05 p.m. The International Monetary Fund has approved $1.4 billion in emergency support for Ukraine to finance government expenditures and shore up the country's balance of payments, central bank Gov. Kyrylo Shevchenko said in a statement.

6:55 p.m. Toyota Motor says it will donate up to 2.5 million euros ($2.7 million) for Ukraine through organizations such as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and the Red Cross. The Japanese carmaker will donate 500,000 euros unconditionally, while its European wings will contribute up to 2 million euros, or four times the amount employees across Europe donate.

In addition, Toyota will allow up to 40 paid hours a year per employee if they offer Ukrainian refugees temporary housing in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and other countries, or if they provide language assistance for refugees.

Toyota Motor Says It Will Donate Up to 2.5 Million Euros ($2.7 Million) for Ukraine Through Organizations Such as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and the Red Cross. © Reuters

6:00 p.m. The number of people fleeing Ukraine since the Russian invasion began has probably now reached 2.1 million to 2.2 million people, according to the head of the

UNHCR, the United Nation's refugee agency. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi says in a news conference during a visit to Stockholm that "the time is now to try to help at the border" rather than discuss how to distribute refugees between countries. Grandi added that Moldova, which is not a member of the European Union, in particular is facing a tide of refugees.

4:24 p.m. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen says the bloc has bought enough liquefied natural gas that it should be independent of Russian imports up until the end of the winter. Von der Leyen also told Germany's ARD television that sanctions against Russia over its invasion of Ukraine were designed to cause maximum impact on Moscow while causing the least damage possible to Western economies.

3:12 p.m. Britain says Ukraine's air defenses are having success against Russian jets, likely preventing Russia from controlling the airspace. "Ukrainian air defences appear to have enjoyed considerable success against Russia's modern combat aircraft, probably preventing them achieving any degree of control of the air," the defense ministry says in an intelligence update posted on Twitter.

People Walk Past a Damaged Building in the Town of Irpin Outside the Ukrainian Capital Kyiv as They Flee From Advancing Russian Troops on March 8. © Reuters

2:24 p.m. An air alert was declared Wednesday morning in and around Kyiv, with residents urged to get to bomb shelters as quickly as possible. "Kyiv region -- air alert. Threat of a missile attack. Everyone immediately to shelters," regional administration head Oleksiy Kuleba said on Telegram. For days, as Russian forces have laid siege to Ukrainian cities, attempts to create corridors to safely evacuate civilians have stumbled amid continuing fighting.

12:00 p.m. Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo called for a cease-fire in the war between Russia and Ukraine and said continued dialogue rather than economic sanctions on Russia is the way to resolve the crisis. Speaking in an exclusive face-to-face interview on Tuesday with Nikkei Editor-in-Chief Tetsuya Iguchi, Widodo said sovereignty and territorial integrity "must be respected by all parties."

11:59 a.m. Yum Brands, parent company of fried chicken chain KFC, says it is pausing investment in Russia, a key market that helped the brand achieve record development

last year. Yum also says it is suspending operations of its 70 KFC company-owned restaurants in the country and finalizing an agreement to suspend all Pizza Hut restaurant operations in Russia, in partnership with its master franchisee. Yum has at least 1,000 KFC and 50 Pizza Hut locations in Russia, nearly all of them independent franchisees.

The Credit Rating Agency Fitch Has Further Downgraded Russia Into Junk Territory, Saying a Default Is Imminent as Sanctions and Trade Restrictions Undermine its Willingness To Service Debt. © Reuters

7:57 a.m. Credit rating agency Fitch downgrades Russia's sovereign rating by six notches further into junk territory to C from B, saying a default is imminent as sanctions and trade restrictions undermine its willingness to service debt. "Further ratcheting up of sanctions and proposals that could limit trade in energy increase probability of a policy response by Russia that includes at least selective non-payment of its sovereign debt obligations," the rating agency said in a statement.

7:40 a.m. Universal Music Group says it is suspending all operations in Russia and closing offices, as it joins a growing number of companies protesting the violence in Ukraine. The world's largest music company's decision followed the announcement last week by Spotify that it would close its offices in Russia in response to what it described as Moscow's unprovoked attack on Ukraine.

6:25 a.m. Chinese companies that defy U.S. restrictions against exporting to Russia may be cut off from American equipment and software they need to make their products, U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo tells The New York Times. The U.S. could "essentially shut" down Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp. or any Chinese companies that defy U.S. sanctions by continuing to supply chips and other advanced technology to Russia, she says.

6:00 a.m. Starbucks says it is suspending all business activity in Russia, as is Coca-Cola. The coffee chain will suspend shipment of its products as well as cafes run by a licensee. Meanwhile, soft-drink and snack maker PepsiCo says it will suspend all advertising in Russia and stop the sale of its drink brands.

A Polish MiG-29 Taxis After a Training Mission at a Military Airport East of Warsaw. © Reuters

4:56 a.m. Poland is ready to deploy all its MiG-29 jets to Ramstein Air Base in Germany and put them at the disposal of the U.S., the Foreign Ministry says, urging other NATO members that possess planes of that type to do the same. The move follows a plea Saturday from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for fighter aircraft.

Warsaw is supporting Kyiv with defensive weapons, but has said it would not send jets to Ukraine, as Poland is not a direct party to the conflict between Ukraine -- which is not a NATO ally -- and Russia.

4:30 a.m. The International Atomic Energy Agency's director general, Rafael Mariano Grossi, says that remote data transmission from safeguards monitoring systems at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine have been lost.

The systems refer to the field of IAEA work aimed at keeping track of nuclear material. The IAEA is looking into the status

of safeguards monitoring systems at other locations in Ukraine. Russia's military entered the Chernobyl site following the country's invasion of Ukraine.

3:15 a.m. The BBC says it has decided to resume English-language reporting in Russia, which it had suspended last week in light of a new law that makes it illegal to report news that could discredit the Russian armed forces.

The move to restart reporting comes after "careful deliberation," the British broadcaster says. It contrasts with The New York Times' decision to pull its reporters from Russia.

Meanwhile, McDonald's says it will temporarily close its restaurants in Russia. The U.S. fast-food chain will continue to pay the salaries of its 62,000 employees in the country.

2:50 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy vows to resist the Russian invasion in a video address to the U.K. House of Commons with echoes of Winston Churchill.

"We will fight until the end. At sea, in the air, we will continue fighting for our land whatever the cost," Zelenskky says through an interpreter.

1:57 a.m. Britain will phase out imports of Russian oil and oil products by the end of 2022, Prime Minister Boris Johnson says, joining other nations including the U.S. in reducing energy dependency on Russia. Business minister Kwasi Kwarteng says he is exploring options to end British imports of Russian gas, which accounts for about 4% of supply in the country.

U.S. President Joe Biden says America will halt imports of Russian energy, saying there is widespread support among Democrats and Republicans for such a move while acknowledging Americans will pay more for gasoline.

U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson Exempted Natural Gas From the Measure. © Reuters

1:20 a.m. Russia is believed to be recruiting fighters in Syria and elsewhere in the Middle East to fortify the military forces as its attacks on Kyiv and other major Ukrainian cities meet stiff resistance.

A senior U.S. Defense Department official says Moscow was recruiting mainly Syrians to fight in the war. Read more

Thursday, March 10

11:07 p.m. Russia bans exports of telecom, medical, automotive, agricultural, electrical and tech equipment, as well as some forestry products, until the end of 2022, in retaliation for Western sanctions on Moscow. Over 200 items are on the suspension list, which also covers railway cars, containers, turbines and other goods.

9:10 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba fail to agree on a cease-fire during a 90-minute meeting near the Turkish resort city of Antalya. Kuleba had hoped to organize a humanitarian corridor from the besieged southeastern Ukrainian city of Mariupol and reach an agreement for a 24-hour truce.

8:35 p.m. Japanese clothing company Fast Retailing is suspending operations in Russia, where it operates 50 Uniqlo stores. Fast Retailing is reversing course after CEO Tadashi Yanai said the company planned to keep its stores open amid sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. His comments drew a backlash on social media.

8:30 p.m. The U.K. government announced sanctions against seven oligarchs, including Chelsea Football Club owner Roman Abramovich, and industrialist Oleg Deripaska, freezing their assets in the country and banning them from traveling there.

Dmitry Polyanskiy
@Dpol_un
Russia government official

That's how #Fakenews is born. We warned in our statement back on 7 March (russiaun.ru/en/news/070322n) that this hospital has been turned into a military object by radicals. Very disturbing that UN spreads this information without verification #Mariupol #Mariupolhospital

17:25
russiaun.ru
Russian | English

evidence proving this.

By our records, 200 thousand civilians are trapped in Mariupol alone and held at gunpoint by the Azov battalion. The humanitarian situation in cities deteriorates rapidly. As for humanitarians who are ready to help, they cannot get in there and prevent the unfolding disaster. People in other regions of Ukraine that have been blocked by nationalist battalions find themselves in the same desperate situation.

Ukrainian radicals show their true face more distinctly by the day. Locals reports that Ukraine's Armed Forces kicked out personnel of natal hospital #1 of the city of Mariupol and set up a

Dmytro Kuleba
@DmytroKuleba
Ukraine government official

Petrifying war crime in Mariupol. Russian air strike targeted a hospital and a maternity house. We could stop this barbarism by protecting our skies. For the sake of humanity, provide us with aircraft, now! Lives are being lost while this is being considered over and over again.

10:06 PM · Mar 9, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

António Guterres @antonioguterres · Mar 10
Today's attack on a hospital in Mariupol, Ukraine, where maternity & children's wards are located, is horrific.

Civilians are paying the highest price for a war that has nothing to do with them.

This senseless violence must stop.

End the bloodshed now.

4:04 AM · Mar 10, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

Chelsea Football Club Owner Roman Abramovich Has Been Sanctioned by the U.K. Which Means That All his Assets in the Country Are Now Frozen. © Reuters

"Our support for Ukraine will not waver. We will not stop in this mission to ramp up the pressure on the Putin regime and choke off funds to his brutal war machine," said British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss in a statement.

5:15 p.m. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian says that "in handling relations with Russia, the U.S. side must not impose so-called sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction on Chinese enterprises and individuals, and must not harm China's legitimate rights and interests."

"Otherwise," he warns, "China will firmly strike back."

3:22 p.m. Rio Tinto says it will end its business with Russian companies. Though the Anglo-Australian resources giant doesn't disclose reasons, the decision is seen as a response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The company operates aluminum refineries in the country's east together with Russian aluminum producer Rusal International.

3:01 p.m. Sony Group's game division and Nintendo say they have suspended software and hardware shipments to Russia, following the invasion of Ukraine.

3:01 p.m. Russia says the Ukrainian claim that it bombed a children's hospital in Mariupol is "fake news" because the building is a former maternity hospital that had long been taken over by troops. "That's how fake news is born," tweeted Dmitry Polyanskiy, Russia's first deputy permanent representative to the United Nations.

1:54 p.m. Japan's Hitachi announces its decision to suspend operations in Russia following a request from the Ukrainian government. The company says in a statement it will stop exports and cease most operations in Russia except for those involving vital electrical power facilities.

1:29 p.m. China's government is walking a fine line on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, stopping short of condemning Moscow but repeatedly calling for peace talks. A quick scroll through Chinese social media platforms like Weibo suggests that in recent days the public has been much more pro-Russia than the official narrative. But experts say the true picture of Chinese sentiment is more complex. Read more.

8:03 a.m. The International Monetary Fund's executive board approves $1.4 billion in emergency financing for Ukraine to help meet urgent spending needs and mitigate the economic impact of Russia's military invasion. The global lender said Ukrainian authorities had canceled an existing standby lending arrangement with the IMF but would work with the fund to design an appropriate economic program focused on rehabilitation and growth when conditions permit.

6:15 a.m. Ukraine informs the International Atomic Energy Agency that the Chernobyl nuclear plant has been disconnected from the electricity grid and lost its supply of external power.

Rafael Mariano Grossi, the IAEA's director general, says the disconnection will not have a critical impact on essential safety functions at the site, where radioactive waste management facilities are located. But it likely will further weaken operational radiation safety at the site, he says, noting that around 210 technical experts and guards essentially have lived there around the clock since Russian forces took control of the site of the 1986 nuclear disaster.

3:00 a.m. Russia's foreign-currency revenues have plunged as more overseas buyers steer clear of its crude oil over the invasion of Ukraine, eroding its purchasing power for key imports.

The country already faces an acute shortage of foreign currencies after the majority of its reserves were frozen by international sanctions. A continued decline in oil-related income would squeeze its ability to pay for cars, semiconductors and other largely imported products. Read more.

2:50 a.m. U.S. stocks are rallying on an easing of crude oil prices. The Dow Jones Industrial Average is up nearly 800 points, or 2.4%, in early afternoon trading. The broader S&P 500 index is up 2.8%.

U.S. benchmark West Texas Intermediate crude futures are down 14% from the previous day.

The United Arab Emirates' ambassador to Washington, Yousef AL Otaiba, says in a statement to the Financial Times: "We favor production increases and will be encouraging OPEC to consider higher production levels."

An Image Taken From Video Provided by the Mariupol City Council Shows the Aftermath of an Alleged Russian Attack on a Hospital on March 9. Ukranian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Called the Air Strike an "Atrocity." © AP

1:50 a.m. Ukraine has denounced what it said was an Russian airstrike on a children's hospital in Mariupol.

Ukrainian authorities say the attack came during an agreed cease-fire period. Reuters quotes regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko as saying 17 people were wounded.

The Russian Defense Ministry did not immediately comment, but a spokesman blamed the Ukrainian side for problems with the civilian evacuations, saying they "did not yield the expected results."

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus says the WHO has verified 18 attacks on health facilities, health workers and ambulances, including 10 deaths and 16 injuries.

1:00 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz have discussed the situation in Ukraine over the phone, Interfax reports, citing the Kremlin press service.

Putin and Scholz "discussed options of political and diplomatic efforts, including the results of the third round of the talks between the Russian delegation and representatives of the Kyiv authorities," Interfax quoted the Kremlin as saying.

Putin also briefed Scholz on efforts to create humanitarian corridors.

Friday, March 11

10:35 p.m. The electricity supply to the Chernobyl nuclear power station has not been restored, Ukraine's nuclear regulator says, despite Russia's energy ministry claiming it was restored by Belarusian specialists on Thursday. Ukraine has warned of an increased risk of a radiation leak if the high-voltage power line, damaged in fighting, is not repaired. The plant is occupied by Russian forces.

6:18 p.m. Wen Wei Po, China's state-backed newspaper in Hong Kong, has lambasted public support for Ukrainians shown by businesses and university student groups, calling it "political interference." The broadsheet criticized a Ukrainian restaurant for "inciting people to be anti-government," after the business voiced support and asked for donations on social media.

A New Safe Confinement Structure Can Be Seen Over the Old Sarcophagus Covering the Damaged Fourth Reactor at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, in April 2018. © Reuters

The paper also called university groups "anti-China rioters" for posting a statement to support Ukraine. Meanwhile, a public opinion research group canceled its release of a poll on the war after it was also targeted in the paper.

2:20 p.m. The Japanese government is disbursing 8.8 billion yen ($75.3 million) from fiscal 2021 reserve funds for humanitarian assistance to Ukraine following its invasion by Russia. Japan will offer the assistance to relevant international organizations including the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and back the activities of Japanese nongovernmental organizations helping Ukraine, the finance ministry said. The amount is part of the emergency humanitarian aid worth $100 million that Prime Minister Fumio Kishida pledged last month.

President Joe Biden Plans To Announce on March 11 That, Along With the European Union and the Group of Seven Countries, the U.S. Will Move To Revoke “Most Favored Nation” Trade Status for Russia. © AP

1:30 p.m. President Joe Biden will announce that, along with the European Union and the Group of Seven countries, the U.S. will move to revoke "most favored nation" trade status for Russia over its invasion of Ukraine, AP reports, citing sources. Biden's move comes as bipartisan pressure has been building in Washington to revoke what is formally known as "permanent normal trade relations" with Russia.

12:00 p.m. Twitter will place labels on and limit the spread of posts from Belarus state media and their senior staff, the company says, in a move aimed to curb misinformation from Russia's ally over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Social media services, including Twitter, in recent years have begun labeling accounts of state broadcasters and news websites to note that the organizations are government-backed. Labeled accounts and their posts are limited in search results and recommendations on Twitter.

Yoel Roth, Twitter's head of site integrity, told reporters the company would label about 15 Belurasian outlets, the largest among them news agency BelTa, which has nearly 37,000 followers. "We've seen evidence that these outlets, as well as their affiliates in Russia, have engaged in information warfare and are employing media and other assets that they control to propagate favorable narratives and to confuse and distract the public about what is going on," Roth said.

5:00 a.m. More than 2.3 million refugees have fled the war in Ukraine since the Russian invasion began, according to the United Nations refugee agency.

Filippo Grandi, the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, says about $500 million in funding is needed for relief activities in Ukraine and neighboring nations.

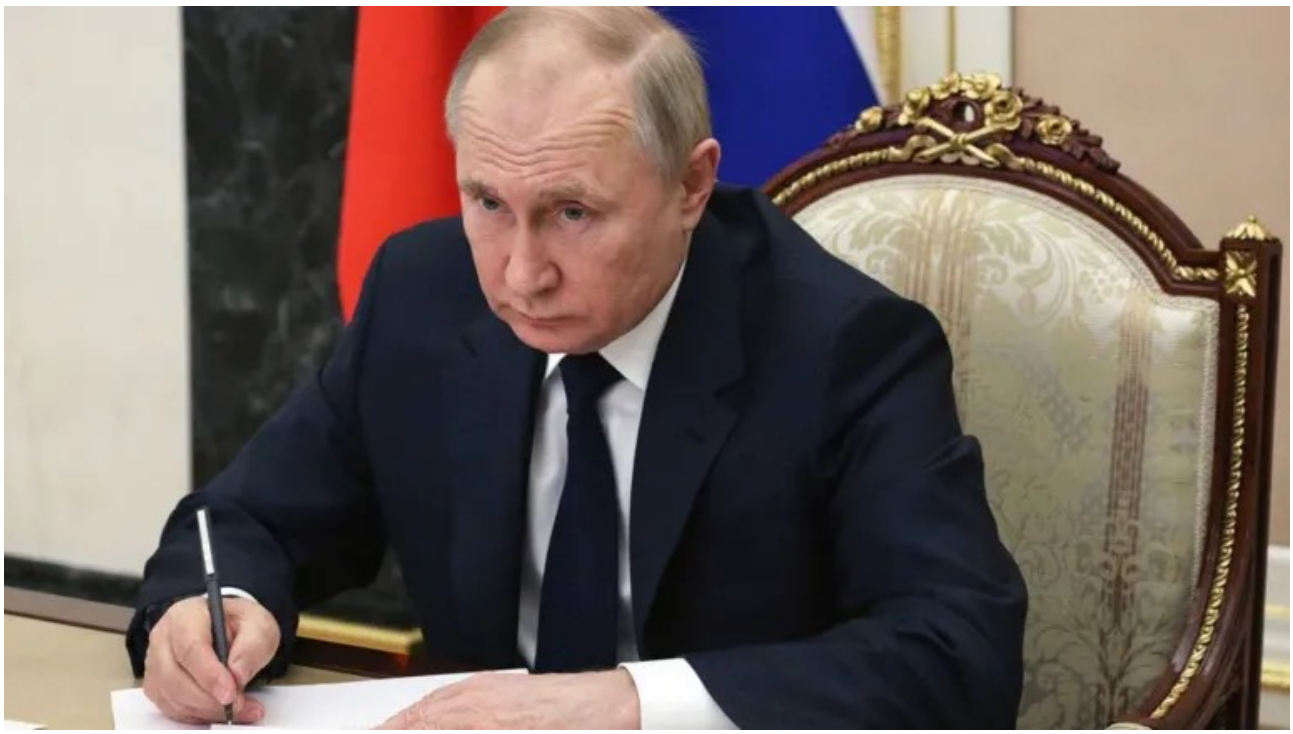
2:30 a.m. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan discusses the Ukraine conflict in a 45-minute phone call with U.S. President Joe Biden.

Erdogan said Turkey continues to make efforts for a political solution, describing the country as an important facilitator able to talk with both the Russian and Ukrainian sides, according to a readout of the call from the Turkish presidency's communications office.

Erdogan said he expects Turkey's request to buy 40 new F-16 fighter jets to upgrade its fleet should be concluded as soon as possible, adding that lifting all "unjust" sanctions on the Turkish defense industry was long overdue.

1:30 a.m. Russia's energy ministry says Belarusian specialists restored electricity supply to the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine. But the International Atomic Energy Agency says it does not have confirmation that power has been restored at the plant.

Chernobyl lost power amid fighting between Russian and Ukrainian forces, after Russia invaded Ukraine.



Russian President Vladimir Putin Chairs a Meeting With Members of the Government via Teleconference in Moscow on March 10. (Sputnik, Kremlin Pool Photo via AP)

12:30 a.m. Vladimir Putin strikes a defiant tone on Western pressure against Russia's economy, saying he expected the sanctions.

"Together with our partners, those who don't recognize these illegal actions, we will undoubtedly find solutions to all those problems that they're trying to create for us," Interfax quotes Putin as telling a meeting of government officials.

"We need to go through the period," the Russian president also says. "We will continue import substitution in all areas, and in the end all this will lead to our greater independence, self-reliance and sovereignty."

He also says Russia will find "legal solutions" to seize assets based in the country from multinationals that have decided to close their operations over the Ukraine invasion.

Goldman Sachs Becomes the First Big Wall Street Firm To Withdraw From Russia Following the Invasion of Ukraine. © Reuters

12:10 a.m. Goldman Sachs becomes the first big Wall Street firm to withdraw from Russia following the invasion of Ukraine.

Saturday, March 12

11:55 p.m. President Zelenskyy updates the Ukrainian troop death toll, saying about 1,300 soldiers have been killed since the start of the Russian invasion. He adds between 500 and 600 Russian soldiers surrendered on Friday.

3:20 p.m. Ukrainian officials accuse Russia of damaging a cancer hospital and several residential buildings in the southern city of Mykolaiv with shelling from heavy artillery. The hospital's head doctor, Maksim Beznosenko, said several hundred patients were in the hospital during the attack but that no one was killed, according to AP. The assault damaged the building and blew out windows. Russian forces have stepped up their attacks on Mykolaiv, located 470 km south of Kyiv, in an attempt to encircle the city.

6:08 p.m. Russian forces have shelled a mosque in the southern Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, where more than 80 adults and children, including Turkish citizens, have taken refuge, Ukraine's foreign ministry says. Ukraine has accused Russia of refusing to allow people out of Mariupol, where a blockade has left hundreds of thousands trapped. Russia blames Ukraine for the failure to evacuate people.

1:00 p.m. Russian regulators say that the country's internet users will be blocked from accessing Instagram, saying it's being used to call for violence against Russian soldiers. In Moscow's latest move to restrict access to foreign social media platforms, communications and media regulator Roskomnadzor said in a statement that it's restricting national access to Instagram. It said the platform is spreading "calls to commit violent acts against Russian citizens, including military personnel."

This Psychiatric Hospital Was Hit by an Artillery Shell, According to the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, in the Village of Oskil, Ukraine, on March 11. (State Emergency Service of Ukraine/Handout via Reuters) © Reuters

10:53 a.m. Many Nike stores throughout Russia were still open on Friday afternoon, according to checks made by Reuters, more than a week after the world's biggest sports retailer said it was temporarily closing down all its shops in the country. Nike says the stores that are open are owned and operated by independent partners, and that it will soon update its store locator online to reflect Nike's closed owned-and-operated stores.

5:09 a.m. The leaders of Russia and Belarus agreed on Friday that Moscow will supply its smaller neighbor with the most up-to-date military equipment in the near future, the official Belarus Belta news agency says. Belta also reports that Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarus leader Alexander Lukashenko agreed at their Kremlin meeting on joint steps for mutual support in the face of Western sanctions, including on energy prices. It did not give details.

A Building Damaged by Shelling Is Lit Up by Sunset in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on March 11. (AP Photo/Andrew Marienko) © Reuters

4:39 a.m. Ukraine accuses Russian forces of violating international law -- the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols -- by abducting the mayor of Melitopol, a city in southeastern Ukraine that fell under Russian control during the invasion. Russia has not commented on Mayor Ivan Fedorov. Ukraine says Russian forces kidnapped him after falsely accusing him of terrorism.

3:12 a.m. Ukraine alleges that neighbor Belarus may plan to invade its territory, as Kyiv accuses Russia of trying to drag its ally into the war by staging air attacks on Belarus from Ukrainian airspace. Belarus has served as a staging post for Russian troops, but the country has not deployed its own forces in active battle.

People Cross the Irpin River as They Evacuate From Irpin Town Next to a Destroyed Bridge Outside of Kyiv. © Reuters

2:18 a.m. The U.S. assesses that Russian strikes in western Ukraine during the past 24 hours are aimed at preventing airfields from being used by Ukrainian forces, a senior American defense official says. The mayor of Lutsk says four people were killed and six wounded in an attack on an airfield there, a rare strike on a target deep in western Ukraine far from the battlefields in the north, east and south.

Sunday, March 13

11:23 p.m. An American journalist was shot and killed by Russian forces in the town of Irpin in Ukraine's Kyiv region and another journalist was wounded, Kyiv regional police chief Andriy Nyebytov said. Nyebytov initially said the dead journalist worked for The New York Times.

However the Times said that the journalist had previously worked for the paper but was not currently working for it. The Times named the journalist as Brent Renaud. "We are deeply saddened to hear of Brent Renaud's death. Brent was a talented photographer and filmmaker who had contributed to The New York Times over the years," The Times said in a statement posted on Twitter by its spokesman.

Nyebytov said that Renaud was shot by Russian forces in Irpin, but did not give details of the incident. He did not identify the wounded journalist.

3:30 p.m. Russian missile attack on a large Ukrainian military facility near the border with NATO member Poland killed 35 people and wounded 134, a Ukrainian official said. Ukraine said foreign military instructors have previously worked at the base, but a NATO official said there were no personnel from the alliance at the base.

12:42 a.m. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov says Moscow has warned the U.S. "that pumping weapons from a number of countries it orchestrates isn't just a dangerous move -- it's an action that makes those convoys legitimate targets."

12:15 a.m. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron hold a 75-minute phone call with President Putin, with the EU leaders calling for an immediate cease-fire in the war. "The conversation is part of ongoing international efforts to end the war in Ukraine," a German government spokesman says, according to Reuters.

A French official who took part in the call says Putin did not appear ready to end the war.

Ukrainian Servicemen Stand by a Destroyed Bridge as Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Continues, in the Town of Irpin Outside Kyiv.

The Kremlin readout of the phone call does not include a mention of a cease-fire, Reuters reported, but says Putin had briefed Scholz and Macron about the state of play in negotiations and responded to their concerns about the humanitarian situation.

Monday, March 14

11:10 p.m. Cease-fire negotiations between Ukraine and Russia are in a "technical pause" until Tuesday, a Ukrainian negotiator says.

Meanwhile, a convoy of more than 160 cars has left the besieged city of Mariupol, carrying civilians out of the fighting.

10:50 p.m. Russia's Finance Ministry is preparing to service some foreign currency debt Wednesday by paying in rubles if sanctions prevent banks from honoring debts in the currency of issue.

"Is that a default? ... From Russia's point of view, we are fulfilling our obligations," Finance Minister Anton Siluanov says on state TV. Russia has to pay coupons on Eurobonds on Wednesday and has already asked Western banks to carry out the transaction, he says.

9:50 p.m. The Chernobyl nuclear power station is having problems again with its external supply of electricity and is

relying on diesel generators, Ukraine's state-owned grid operator Ukrenergo says.

9:30 p.m. Putin has signed a law allowing Russian airlines to operate leased planes without a foreign certificate, news agency Tass reports.

"The law is aimed at preserving the foreign airplane fleet with Russian operators for purposes of smooth operation of civil aviation as part of anti-sanction measures," Tass says, citing an official explanation of the law.

9:00 p.m. A fourth round of talks between Russia and Ukraine on a cease-fire has begun, according to Ukrainian negotiator Mykhailo Podolya. Hopes for progress are lifting stocks and reversing some of crude oil's gains.

8:43 p.m. Russia says it has not asked China for military assistance. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov denies reports to that effect, and says Russia can fulfill its aims in Ukraine.

6:00 p.m. Ninety children have been killed and more than 100 wounded in Ukraine since Russia invaded on Feb. 24, the Ukrainian general prosecutor's office says. "The highest number of victims are in the Kyiv, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kherson, Mykolayiv and Zhytomyr regions," it says in a statement. Russia denies targeting civilians in what it calls a "special operation" to demilitarize and "denazify" Ukraine.

6:00 p.m. India is considering taking up a Russian offer to buy its crude oil and other commodities at discounted prices with payment via a rupee-ruble transaction, two Indian officials say, amid tough Western sanctions on Russia over

its invasion of Ukraine. India, which imports 80% of its oil needs, usually buys about 2% to 3% of its supplies from Russia. But with oil prices up 40% so far this year, the government is looking at increasing supplies from Russia if it can help reduce its rising energy bill.

5:42 p.m. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan will discuss the war in Ukraine with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz at talks in Ankara on Monday, his office says, as both countries press on with efforts to secure a cease-fire 19 days into Russia's invasion.

NATO member Turkey shares a maritime border with Ukraine and Russia in the Black Sea and has good ties with both. It has said the invasion is unacceptable and voiced support for Ukraine, but has also opposed sanctions on Moscow, while offering to mediate.

4:47 p.m. More than 2,500 residents of the Black Sea port city of Mariupol have been killed since Russian invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, Ukraine's presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovych says in a televised interview. He says he was citing figures from the Mariupol city administration, and accuses Russian forces of preventing humanitarian aid from reaching the encircled city on Sunday. Russia says it does not target civilians.

4:46 p.m. Ukraine will try to evacuate trapped civilians through 10 "humanitarian corridors" on Monday, including from towns near the capital Kyiv and in the eastern region of Luhansk, Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereschuk says.

"We will, once again, try to unblock the movement of the humanitarian convoy carrying food and medicine to (the

port city of Mariupol) from Berdiansk (in southeastern Ukraine)," she says in a video address.

4:07 p.m. Australia says it is imposing new sanctions on 33 Russian oligarchs and business people, including Chelsea Football Club owner Roman Abramovich and Gazprom CEO Alexey Miller, over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Foreign Minister Marise Payne says Australia supports moves by the U.S., U.K., Canada, the European Union and New Zealand to take action against high-profile Russians.

1:33 p.m. Japan is urging crypto exchanges not to process transactions involving crypto assets subject to asset-freeze sanctions against Russia and Belarus, officials say. The government will work to strengthen measures against the transfer of funds using crypto assets that break the sanctions, the Ministry of Finance and the Financial Services Agency (FSA) say in a joint statement. Unauthorized payments to targets under sanctions, including in crypto assets -- such as cryptocurrency and non-fungible tokens -- are subject to punishment of up to three years in prison or a 1 million yen ($8,488) fine, according to the FSA.

11:20 a.m. Taiwanese personal computer maker ASUS will put in place a plan to "evacuate" its staff and business in Russia, Taiwan's economy minister says, after a Ukraine minister asked it to leave Russia. Mykhailo Fedorov, Ukraine's deputy prime minister and minister of digital transformation, tweeted a letter on Thursday to ASUS Chairman Jonney Shih calling on the company to end its business in the country. Russia has invaded Ukraine in what Moscow calls a "special operation."

9:14 a.m. Ukrainian officials negotiating with Russian counterparts are to ensure direct talks between the

countries' leaders that could lead to peace, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says. The next round of Ukraine talks is scheduled for early Monday, via video links. Ukraine has repeatedly called for direct talks between Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin, pointing to the Russian leader as the one making the final decisions.

7:30 a.m. Bermuda's aviation regulator says it is suspending certification of all Russian-operated airplanes registered in the British overseas territory due to international sanctions over the war in Ukraine. The move is expected to affect more than 700 planes. The regulator says it is unable to confidently approve the planes as airworthy due to the impact of sanctions on its ability to conduct safety oversight. Manufacturers are no longer providing parts to Russian airlines as part of the sanctions.

3:06 a.m. Talks between Russia and Ukraine are not taking place right now but will continue on Monday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted as saying by the RIA news agency. Peskov made the comments after Ukrainian presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovych said Ukraine and Russia were actively conducting talks on Sunday, with the situation around the besieged city of Mariupol a particular focus.

A Flag Is Being Waved at Half Time in Support of Ukraine Amid Russia's Invasion Before the Premier League Arsenal vs Leicester City Match at Emirates Stadium, London, Britain, Mar.13. © Reuters

1:35 a.m. Russia said had attacked the Yavoriv training facility in western Ukraine, adding the strike had killed "up to 180 foreign mercenaries" and destroyed a large amount of weapons supplied by outside nations. Defence ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov told a briefing that Russia would continue its attacks against what he called foreign mercenaries.

Ukrainian regional governor Maksym Kozytskyy said 35 people were killed and 134 wounded in the attack

12:05 a.m. U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan and senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Yang Jiechi will meet in Rome Monday, the White House National Security Council said. Talks will center on "efforts to manage the

competition between our two countries and discuss the impact of Russia's war against Ukraine on regional and global security," Emily Horne said. .

Tuesday, March 15

11:30 p.m. The U.K. announces additional sanctions over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, targeting more than 370 additional people.

"Russian oligarchs now subject to UK sanctions include Mikhail Fridman, Petr Aven, and German Khan. The oligarchs who will be sanctioned today have a combined estimated worth of more than 100 billion pounds," or $130 billion, according to a statement by Foreign Secretary Liz Truss.

11:15 p.m. Asked whether Russian tennis player Daniil Medvedev should play at Wimbledon this year, U.K. sports minister Nigel Huddleston avoids giving a direct answer but says: "We need some potential assurance that they are not supporters of Putin and we are considering what requirements we may need to try and get some assurances along those lines."

Daniil Medvedev Hits a Shot in his Third Round Match Against Gael Monfils (FRA) During the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden. (Kamin Oncea-USA TODAY Sports)

10:59 p.m. Russia will propose its own United Nations resolution on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, Moscow's U.N. ambassador Vassily Nebenzia tells reporters.

The ambassador accuses Ukrainian forces of acts including the use of cluster munitions -- accusations that have been leveled against Russia's own forces. Asked by a reporter what it would take for Russia to agree to a cease-fire, Nebenzia says Russia will stop its "special military operation" when its goals are achieved. These include the "demilitarization" of Ukraine.

10:15 p.m. Talks between Ukraine and Russia have resumed, according to a Ukrainian negotiator.

10:00 p.m. Japan wants the United Arab Emirates to make further active contributions as a member of OPEC to stabilize oil prices, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida tells Abu

Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in a phone call.

Kishida spoke with reporters in Tokyo after the call. He declined to comment on whether he asked the UAE's de facto leader to increase oil output.

Meanwhile, both international benchmark Brent crude and U.S. benchmark West Texas Intermediate have fallen below $100 a barrel as Russia shows support for resuming the Iran nuclear deal.

7:41 p.m. The northern Ukrainian region of Chernihiv warns of nationwide air attacks, urging citizens to head to shelters. It is not immediately clear whether other regions had issued similar warnings of new airstrikes by Russian forces that invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

6:26 p.m. Russian forces fired rockets at the main civilian airport in Ukraine's eastern Dnipro region overnight, destroying its runway and damaging the terminal building, regional Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko says.

6:09 p.m. The capital Kyiv will impose a curfew from 8 p.m. (6 p.m. GMT) on Tuesday to 7 a.m. (5 a.m. GMT) on Thursday after several apartment blocks were struck by Russian forces based outside the city, Mayor Vitaliy Klitschko announces. Two people were killed in the latest bloodshed, he says.

4:40 p.m. The prime ministers of the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia will travel to Kyiv on Tuesday to meet President Volodomyr Zelenskyy as representatives of European Union leaders overall, Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala says on social networks, according to Reuters. "The

purpose of the visit is to confirm the unequivocal support of the entire European Union for the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine," he said. "The aim of this visit is also to present a broad package of support for Ukraine and Ukrainians."

1:30 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked the woman who staged an anti-war protest during a Russian state TV news broadcast. "I am grateful to those Russians who do not stop trying to convey the truth," he said, "to those who fight disinformation and tell the truth, real facts, to their friends and loved ones, and personally to the woman who entered the studio of Channel One with a poster against the war."

Marina Ovsyannikovan, Identified by an Independent Protest-Monitoring Group as an Employee of Channel One, Holds a Sign Protesting the Ukraine War During a Live Broadcast.

11:50 a.m. The war in Ukraine is likely to be over by early May when Russia runs out of resources to attack its neighbor, says Oleksiy Arestovich, an adviser to the

Ukrainian president's chief of staff. Talks between Kyiv and Moscow -- in which Arestovich is not personally involved -- have so far produced very few results other than several humanitarian corridors. In a video published by several Ukrainian media, Arestovich said: "I think that no later than in May, early May, we should have a peace agreement -- maybe much earlier, we will see. I am talking about the latest possible dates."

10:31 a.m. An anti-war protester interrupted a live news bulletin on Russia's state-run Channel One television on Monday, holding up a sign behind the studio presenter and shouting slogans denouncing the war in Ukraine. The sign began in English, "NO WAR," then said in Russian: "Stop the war. Don't believe propaganda. They are lying to you here." The woman was named by an independent protest-monitoring group as Marina Ovsyannikova, an employee of the channel.

10:15 a.m. Japan has decided to freeze assets of an additional 17 Russian individuals, the Ministry of Finance says. Eleven members of the State Duma, five family members of banker Yuri Kovalchuk and also billionaire Viktor Vekselberg were targeted in the sanctions. The move brings the total number of Russians targeted by Japan's asset freezes in response to the Ukraine crisis to 61.

Businessman Viktor Vekselberg and Russian President Vladimir Putin Attend a Ceremony for the Unveiling of a Monument to World War II Resistance Heroes in Concentration Camps and Ghettos at the Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center in Moscow on June 4, 2019. © Reuters

5:29 a.m. U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan and China's top diplomat, Politburo member Yang Jiechi, discuss the war in a seven-hour meeting in Rome.

The officials "underscored the importance of maintaining open lines of communication between the United States and China," according to the White House.

5:04 a.m. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan are in complete agreement that a cease-fire must be reached as soon as possible in Ukraine, Scholz tells reporters after the two leaders meet in Ankara.

"We will persistently continue our efforts in order for a lasting cease-fire to be reached," Erdogan says.

Both Scholz and Erdogan have positioned themselves as mediators in the ongoing conflict.

3:30 a.m. The World Bank has approved almost $200 million more in funding for social services in Ukraine, bringing the total financing mobilized by the lender for the war-torn country to more than $925 million.

Of this amount, $350 million has already been disbursed to Ukraine, the World Bank says.

Besides creating a massive outflow of refugees into neighboring countries, the war in Ukraine has also displaced at least 1.85 million people within the country, according to United Nations estimates published last week.

A Woman Walks Past a Burning Apartment Building After Shelling in Mariupol. © AP

3:00 a.m. President Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett have discussed the situation in Ukraine over the phone, the Kremlin says.

Bennett has emerged as a potential mediator between Russian and Ukraine as the war grinds on. He has been in contact with both Zelenskyy and Putin, flying to Moscow recently to meet with the Russian president in person. Israel has been proposed as a potential location should Zelenskyy and Putin agree to meet face to face.

"Bennett informed the Russian president about his recent contacts about Ukraine with leaders of a number of countries," Interfax reports, citing a Kremlin statement on the two leaders' phone call. "Vladimir Putin, for his part, shared his evaluation of the negotiation process between the Russian and Ukrainian representatives taking place by video link these days.”

Wednesday, March 16

11:34 p.m. The World Bank says poor countries may face grain shortages due to their high dependence on Ukrainian wheat exports that have been disrupted by Russia's invasion.

The World Bank's latest Trade Watch report identified Gambia, Lebanon, Moldova, Djibouti, Libya, Tunisia and Pakistan as the most exposed to the disruptions of wheat exports from Ukraine.

"These importers will have trouble quickly switching to alternative sources, possibly leading to supply shortages in the short run," the World Bank said.

11:23 p.m. President Zelenskyy urges the U.S. Congress to provide more weapons to help his country fight off Russian airstrikes.

"Russia has turned the Ukrainian sky into a source of death," he told a meeting of the House of Representatives and Senate. "I need to protect our skies."

11:18 p.m. U.S. President Joe Biden will announce an additional $800 million in security assistance to Ukraine on Wednesday, with the funding coming from a massive spending bill he signed into law that includes $13.6 billion in new aid to Ukraine. The new funding will provide additional humanitarian, security and economic assistance, and roughly half of the aid package will be used to deploy troops to the region and send defense equipment to Ukraine.

11:05 p.m. President Zelenskyy begins his address to U.S. lawmakers, in which he is expected to appeal urgently for more help in fending off a Russian invasion that has brought

death and destruction and sent a wave of refugees fleeing his country.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Presents his National Statement at the U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, U.K., On Nov. 1. © Reuters

7:12 p.m. Russia says that a neutral Ukraine with its own army along the lines of Austria or Sweden was being looked at as a possible compromise in peace talks with Kyiv. "This is a variant that is currently being discussed and which could really be seen as a compromise," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted as saying by RIA news agency.

5:55 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that some formulations for agreements with Ukraine are close to being agreed on, claiming neutral status for Kyiv is under "serious" consideration.

Earlier, in a video message, Zelenskyy had said that positions during the negotiations were becoming more "realistic," but that the meetings continue and more time is needed "for the decisions to be in the interests of Ukraine."

Rescuers Help a Woman Evacuate a Residential Building Damaged by Shelling in Kyiv, in This Handout Picture Released March 16 by Ukraine's State Emergency Service. © Reuters

5:37 p.m. Ukraine's armed forces are launching counteroffensives against Russian forces "in several operational areas," presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak says on Twitter without giving details. "This radically changes the parties' dispositions," he says.

4:10 p.m. International drugstore chain Watsons, a unit of Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing's CK Hutchison Holdings, is shutting down all its stores in Russia. It says it made the decision in January due to "unsatisfactory business performance."

4:50 a.m. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu plans to visit Russia on Wednesday, followed by Ukraine, as Ankara makes diplomatic efforts to end the war between the two countries, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says.

"The Ukraine crisis has reminded us that it is not a choice but an obligation for Turkiye to be strong in the political,

economic, and military fields and to be in a position to support its friends and brothers beyond its self-sufficiency," Erdogan is quoted as saying by Anadolu Agency.

4:35 a.m. The leaders of three EU member stats have arrived in Kyiv in a show of European solidarity even as Russian shelling continued on residential neighborhoods in the Ukrainian capital.

The trip by the prime ministers of Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia is the highest-profile visit to the Ukrainian capital since Russia began its invasion on Feb. 24. Read more.

3:40 a.m. Over 3 million people have fled Ukraine since the Russian invasion, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says, as the rapidly growing crisis tests international cooperation.

More than 100,000 -- and sometimes over 200,000 -- refugees have left Ukraine daily since the war began Feb. 24. UNHCR describes the exodus as the "fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II" and predicts that 4 million or more ultimately will leave Ukraine. Read more.

2:20 a.m. President Zelenskyy suggests his country may give up on joining NATO, which has no apparent desire to admit it.

"If we cannot enter through open doors, then we must cooperate with the associations with which we can, which will help us, protect us ... and have separate guarantees," Zelenskyy is quoted as saying.

The leaders of NATO states will meet next week for an extraordinary summit in Brussels, with U.S. President Joe Biden to attend.

2:00 a.m. Tributes are pouring in from the media industry for Fox News cameraman Pierre Zakrzewski, who was killed when a vehicle in which he was traveling came under attack near Kyiv.

1:40 a.m. Roman Abramovich, the Russian billionaire who owns the Chelsea football club, is said to be in Moscow now. His arrival comes the same day the European Union added him to a list of sanctions aimed at squeezing Putin and his allies.

1:08 a.m. France will offer diplomatic support to a Russian woman who interrupted a live news bulletin on Russia's state TV Channel One to denounce the war in Ukraine, President Emmanuel Macron says, according to media reports.

"Stop the war. No to war," the woman protester, Marina Ovsyannikova, shouted as the news anchor continued to read from her teleprompter. The Kremlin called her act of dissent a form of "hooliganism." Ovsyannikova's act drew international praise, including from Ukrainian presidential adviser Mikhaylo Podolyak.

1:00 a.m. Russia bans 13 individuals including U.S. President Joe Biden, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton from entering the country, in response to sanctions imposed by Washington on Russian officials.

The move is "in response to a series of unprecedented sanctions banning, among other things, entry into the United States for Russian top officials," according to a Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement quoted by Interfax.

But Moscow says it is maintaining official relations with Washington and will ensure that any necessary high-level contacts with the people on the list can take place.

As Russian Forces Continue To Attack Kyiv, Fire Fighters and Rescuers Do Their Jobs by a Residential Building Damaged by Shelling. (Photo Courtesy of State Emergency Service of Ukraine via Reuters)

Thursday, March 17

6:30 p.m. Ukrainian authorities are struggling to determine the fate of hundreds of civilians who had been sheltering in a theater hit by a Russian airstrike in the besieged city of Mariupol. A photo released by Mariupol's city council shows an entire section of the large, three-story theater had collapsed after the strike Wednesday evening. Several hundred people had taken refuge in the building, seeking safety from Russia's three-week assault on the strategic Azov Sea port city.

4:00 p.m. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has largely stalled on all fronts, with Russian forces suffering heavy losses and making minimal progress on land, sea or in the air in recent days, British military intelligence says. "Ukrainian resistance remains staunch and well-coordinated," The Ministry of Defense said. "The vast majority of Ukrainian territory, including all major cities, remains in Ukrainian hands."

3:15 p.m. Hungary expects a "bigger wave" of refugees to arrive from Ukraine next week, Prime Minister Viktor Orban says in a video posted on his Facebook page. Visiting a border crossing near Hungary's border with Romania and Ukraine, Orban says more border guards would be stationed there next week to handle the expected influx of refugees.

A Woman and Child Evacuate From a Kyiv Residential Building Damaged by Shelling as Russia's Attack on Ukraine Continues. (State Emergency Service of Ukraine/Handout via Reuters)

2:02 p.m. At least one person was killed and three wounded after remains of a downed missile hit a residential building in Kyiv, the emergency service of Ukraine says. The 16-story building was struck at 5:02 a.m., it said in a statement, adding that 30 people have been evacuated and a fire has been put out.

12:41 p.m. Japan's defense ministry says it has spotted four large Russian amphibious warfare ships sailing close to its islands as they traveled west, possibly toward Europe. Photos of the amphibious transports, typically used for landing expeditionary forces ashore, published by the ministry show what appeared to be military trucks loaded onto the deck of one of the vessels. Asked if they could be bound for Ukraine, a ministry spokesman said, "We don't know where they are heading, but their heading suggests it is possible."

Members of the Ukrainian Territorial Defense Forces Rest During Tactical Exercises Near Lviv, Ukraine, on March 16. © Reuters

9:00 a.m. China's ambassador to Ukraine this week assured the head of the Lviv military administration that his country would "never attack Ukraine," according to media reports and a translated news release from the website of the Lviv Regional State Administration. Praising the "unity" of the Ukrainian people, Ambassador Fan Xianrong is quoted as saying: "I can responsibly say that China will forever be a good force for Ukraine, both economically and politically. We will always respect your state, we will develop relations on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. We will respect the path chosen by Ukrainians, because this is the sovereign right of every nation."

5:00 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden's characterization of Putin as a "war criminal" is "unacceptable and unforgivable," the Kremlin says.

4:49 a.m. Russian forces have bombed a theater sheltering hundreds of civilians in Mariupol, resulting in an unknown number of casualties, Ukraine's foreign ministry says. The ministry accuses Moscow of a war crime in the encircled port city.

Russia denies targeting civilians, saying that the Azov Battalion nationalist Ukrainian group instead blew up the theater.

4:10 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden calls Putin a "war criminal" while speaking to reporters at the White House. Asked about the comment, White House press secretary Jen Psaki says, "The president's remarks speak for themselves" and he was "speaking from his heart, and speaking from what we've seen on television, which is barbaric actions by a brutal dictator."

Friday, March 18

11:30 p.m. Russia's central bank has held its key interest rate steady at 20%. The rate had been sharply hiked to the current level to try to halt a plunge in the ruble.

A rally in Russian bonds continued on Friday as investors bet Moscow had averted a sovereign default by making interest payments in dollars. JPMorgan had processed $117mn in coupon payments that had been due on two bonds on Wednesday, passing the money to payment agent Citigroup for distribution to bondholders, the Financial Times reported, citing a person familiar with the matter.

Russian President Vladimir Putin Attends a Concert in Moscow Marking the Eighth Anniversary of Russia's Annexation of Crimea. © Reuters

11:00 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a rally at a packed Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow to justify the invasion of Ukraine, telling tens of thousands of people that all the Kremlin's aims would be achieved.

"We know what we need to do, how to do it and at what cost. And we will absolutely accomplish all of our plans," Putin says.

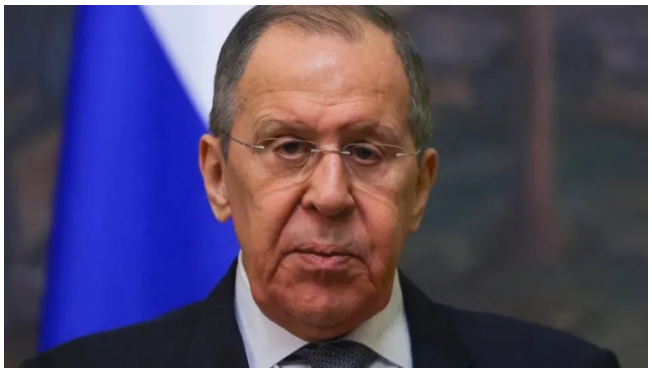
He says the "special military operation" in Ukraine illustrates the unity of Russia.

But coverage of his speech on state television was unexpectedly interrupted by what the Kremlin said was a technical problem with a server.

10:00 p.m. Ukraine's human rights ombudswoman says 130 people have been rescued from a bombed theater in Mariupol, but that there is still no information on more than 1,000 other people officials believe were sheltering there when the bomb fell.

"Rescuers are working. There is only this information: 130 people are alive and have been taken out. The rest are waiting for help," she says on national television.

6:00 p.m. Russia has lost all illusions about relying on the West, and Moscow will never accept a view of the world dominated by a United States that wants to act like a global sheriff, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says.



Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov Said on March 18 That his Country Has Lost all Faith in the West and Will Never Accept a World Dominated by the U.S. © Reuters

5:50 p.m. Over 2 million refugees have entered Poland from Ukraine since the start of the Russian invasion on Feb. 24, the Polish border guard says. "Today, March 18 at 0900 (local time) the number of refugees from Ukraine exceeded 2 million. Mainly women and children," the border guard wrote on Twitter.

Smoke Rises From a Factory Building Near Lviv Airport on March 18. © Reuters

3:03 p.m. Russian missiles struck an area near the airport of the western Ukrainian city of Lviv on Friday, its Mayor Andriy Sadovy said, though he added that the airport itself had not been attacked. Authorities are assessing the situation and will issue updates, he said. Television station Ukraine 24 earlier said at least three explosions had been heard in the city.

12:00 p.m. Japan says it will impose sanctions against 15 Russian individuals and nine organizations, including defense officials and state-owned arms exporter Rosoboronexport. Japan has now imposed sanctions, which

include asset freezing, on 76 individuals, seven banks and 12 other organizations in Russia, according to the Finance Ministry. The government has newly designated Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova and several military equipment makers, including United Aircraft Corp., which manufactures fighter jets.

Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova Is Among the 15 People Newly Sanctioned by Japan. © Reuters

11:54 a.m. The Bank of Japan has decided to stick with its huge stimulus in the face of economic headwinds such as commodity inflation and the Ukraine war, even as other major central banks shift to tighter policy. In a two-day meeting that ended on Friday, the BOJ opted to keep its key policy levers unchanged, guiding short-term interest rates to minus 0.1% and long-term rates around zero.

9:42 a.m. Australia says it has placed sanctions on Russia's finance ministry and 11 additional banks and government organizations, covering the majority of the country's

banking assets along with all entities that handle Russia's sovereign debt. "With our recent inclusion of the Central Bank of Russia, Australia has now targeted all Russian government entities responsible for issuing and managing Russia's sovereign debt," Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne says in a statement.

6:30 a.m. Sixty-five Turkish citizens and their relatives have been evacuated from the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol, Turkey's Anadolu Agency reports.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken Stands by as President Joe Biden Speaks About Assistance the American Government Is Providing to Ukraine on March 16. © Reuters

3:50 a.m. China "has a responsibility to use its influence with President Putin and to defend the international rules and principles that it professes to support," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken tells reporters, adding that Beijing has so far refused to condemn Russia's aggression.

Blinken's remarks come ahead of a phone call between U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"President Biden will be speaking to President Xi tomorrow and will make clear that China will bear responsibility for any actions it takes to support Russia's aggression, and we will not hesitate to impose costs," Blinken says.

In the same briefing, Blinken confirms that an American citizen has been killed in Ukraine but says he has no further details.

3:30 a.m. In case you missed it, former California governor and "The Terminator" star Arnold Schwarzenegger has weighed in on the Ukraine war.

2:20 a.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida arrives in New Delhi this weekend for a meeting with Indian Prime Ministetr Narendra Modi, during which the Russia-Ukraine conflict and ways to boost cooperation among Quad nations are expected to be high on the agenda. Read more.

12:50 a.m. The war in Ukraine "could have been avoided if NATO had heeded the warnings from among its own leaders and officials over the years that its eastward expansion would lead to greater instability in the region," South African President Cyril Ramaphosa argues.

Ramaphosa's latest remarks on the Ukraine war come on Twitter and in the South African parliament.

The day before, the president said he had spoken to Russia's Putin. "When I spoke to President Putin, I got a sense that we are looking at an agreement possibly in the making soon because he too would like to bring this conflict to an end, and I think the president of Ukraine would also like to do that, and I'm hoping to speak to him as well," Ramaphosa said in a speech.

Ramaphosa isn't the only African voice expressing support for Russia's security interests.

Lt. Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba of Uganda, son of the country's president, last month tweeted: "The majority of mankind (that are non-white) support Russia's stand in Ukraine. Putin is absolutely right!" Read Nikkei Asia's interview with the Ugandan president here.

Dmytro Kuleba @DmytroKuleba
Ukraine government official

Welcomed my Turkish counterpart and friend @MevlutCavusoglu in Ukraine. Turkey's solidarity remains unwavering. Grateful for political and humanitarian support, as well as Turkey's ongoing diplomatic efforts to put an end to Russia's devastating war against Ukraine.

7:03 PM · Mar 17, 2022

13.1K Reply Share

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A Theater in Mariupol Where Hundreds Were Sheltering Was Hit by a Russian Airstrike on Wednesday. (Donetsk Regional Civil-Military Administration Council via AP)

12:05 a.m. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has discussed the situation in Ukraine in a call with Russia's Vladimir Putin.

Erdogan reiterated a proposal to host Putin and Zelenskyy for talks, Anadolu Agency reports. It was unclear how Putin responded to the offer.

Earlier, Turkey's foreign minister visited Ukraine.

Saturday, March 19

10:43 p.m. Zelenskyy calls for comprehensive peace talks with Moscow to stop its invasion, saying it would otherwise take Russia "generations" to recover from its losses in the war. He accuses the Kremlin in an overnight video address of deliberately creating "a humanitarian catastrophe."

9:28 p.m. Russia says it used a Kinzhal hypersonic missile to destroy an arms depot in western Ukraine. If confirmed, it would be the first time Moscow has used such a weapon since its troops invaded Ukraine.

7:35 p.m. Germany will explore liquefied natural gas supply in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, and aims to secure a hydrogen deal, making it less dependent on Russia, Economy Minister Robert Habeck says before traveling to the two Persian Gulf countries. Russia is the largest supplier of gas to Germany, according to data on the Economy Ministry's website.

2:35 p.m. Nearly 6.5 million people have been displaced inside Ukraine, according to the U.N. migration agency, in addition to the 3.2 million who have already fled the country. That means about one in five of Ukraine's 44 million people have been forced from their homes. The agency says in a report that more than 2 million others were actively considering leaving their homes due to the war.

8:00 a.m. Three Russian cosmonauts have arrived at the International Space Station, where they were welcomed by the crew of American, German and Russian astronauts orbiting the earth.

Oleg Artemyev, Denis Matveyev and Sergei Korsakov blasted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome, Interfax reports.

2:50 a.m. The U.S. Commerce Department moves to effectively ground 100 airplanes that have recently flown to Russia and are believed to violate U.S. export controls, including a plane used by Russian businessman Roman Abramovich, reports Reuters.

Companies and other entities around the world may be subject to U.S. enforcement actions for any refueling, maintenance, repair, or the provision of spare parts or services that violate the export controls, the department said.

1:45 a.m. Chinese President Xi Jinping has told U.S. President Joe Biden that "the Ukraine crisis is not something we want to see," according to Chinese state media, following a nearly two-hour video call between the two leaders.

Coming at Biden's request, the discussion was the first time the leaders spoke since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has reshuffled both men's foreign policy maneuvering since their first video call in November. Read more.

12:30 a.m. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will deliver a virtual address to Japan's parliament on Wednesday, ruling party sources say. The leader of the war-torn country has addressed the U.S. Congress as well as lawmakers in the U.K., Germany and Poland, calling for military aid and stronger sanctions on Russia.

He is expected to call on Japan to provide support and maintain solidarity with the international community against the Russian invasion.

Sunday, March 20

11:00 p.m. Senior government officials from South Korea and Germany have headed to Qatar, one of the world's biggest exporters of liquefied natural gas, to discuss energy.

South Korean Prime Minister Kim Boo-kyum and German Economy Minister Robert Habeck both met with Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the Qatar News Agency reports.

5:00 p.m. Russia struck Ukraine with cruise missiles from ships in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, and launched

hypersonic missiles from Crimean airspace, the Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov says. Russia had carried out strikes against Ukraine's military infrastructure on Saturday night and Sunday morning.

3:38 p.m. Russian forces have bombed an art school in the besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, where about 400 residents had taken shelter, the city council says. There was no immediate word of casualties from the Saturday attack, although the council says the building was destroyed and there were victims under the rubble.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Attends a Reward Ceremony for Police Special Team Members in Kyiv on March 19. (Handout Photo From the Ukrainian Presidential Press Service) © Reuters

3:04 a.m. A new shipment of U.S. weapons will arrive in Ukraine soon, including Javelin and Stinger missiles, Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council Secretary Oleksiy Danilov says. The weapons "will be on the territory of our country in the nearest future. We are talking about days," he says.

2:32 a.m. Kyiv city authorities say 228 people had been killed in the capital since the invasion began, including four children. A further 912 people have been wounded, the Kyiv city administration says in a statement. The figures could not be independently verified.

12:30 a.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Indian counterpart Narendra Modi agree the war in Ukraine must be resolved in accordance with international law. Kishida is on a trip to New Delhi where he also is holding discussions with Modi about security issues in the Indo-Pacific region. In a joint statement issued after the talks, they aired "serious concern about the ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis" in Ukraine, and urged an "immediate cessation of violence," but did not refer to Russia directly.

Monday, March 21

9:06 p.m. Several hundred mines have drifted into the western Black Sea after breaking off from cables near Ukrainian ports due to storms, Russia's main intelligence agency says.

Novorossiisk Port Authority, in a note seen by Reuters, says shipping is at risk in the area. The Black Sea is a major shipping artery for grain, oil and oil products.

3:30 p.m. Australia has imposed an immediate ban on exports of alumina and aluminum ores, including bauxite, to Russia, the government said on Sunday, as part of its ongoing sanctions against Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine. "Russia relies on Australia for nearly 20% of its alumina needs," the Australian government said in a joint statement from several ministries, including the prime minister's office. It added that the move will limit Russia's capacity to produce aluminum, which is a critical export for Russia.

3:15 p.m. Sinopec Engineering Group, a Hong Kong-listed unit of Chinese state-owned oil conglomerate Sinopec, says its four ongoing engineering projects in Russia remain "relatively stable" despite the wave of sanctions imposed on Moscow in response to its invasion of Ukraine. Chairwoman Sun Lili told analysts during the company's annual results call that risks in Russia "are, in general, controllable." The four contracts, all related to gas and chemical projects, are together worth more than $1 billion, she said.

1:00 p.m. An ammonia leak at a chemical plant in the eastern Ukrainian city of Sumy has contaminated an area with a radius of more than 5 km, officials say. Sumy's

regional governor, Dmytro Zhyvytskyy, didn't say what caused the leak. The Sumykhimprom plant is on the eastern outskirts of the city, which has a population of about 263,000 and has been regularly shelled by Russian troops in recent weeks. Authorities urged people in Sumy to breathe through gauze bandages soaked in citric acid.

A Ukrainian Service Member in the in the Sumy Region: an Ammonia Leak at a Chemical Plant in the City of Sumy Has Contaminated an Area With a Radius of More Than 5 Km, Officials Say. © Reuters

12:52 p.m. President Joe Biden has added a stop in Poland to his trip this week to Europe for urgent talks with NATO and European allies, as Russian forces concentrate their fire upon cities and trapped civilians in a nearly month-old invasion of Ukraine. Biden will first travel to Brussels and then to Poland on Friday to meet with leaders there, press secretary Jen Psaki says in a statement Sunday night.

10:00 a.m. European Union governments will consider whether to impose an oil embargo on Russia as they gather this week with U.S. President Joe Biden for a series of

summits designed to harden the West's response to Moscow. "We are working on a fifth round of sanctions and many new names are being proposed," a senior EU diplomat told Reuters on condition of anonymity because the discussions are not public. EU governments will take up the discussion among foreign ministers on Monday, before Biden arrives in Brussels on Thursday for summits with NATO's 30 allies, as well as the EU and in a Group of Seven format including Japan.

9:50 a.m. Ukraine says there is no question of surrendering the city of Mariupol after Russia called on Ukrainian forces on Sunday to lay their down arms in the besieged port city. "There can be no question of any surrender, laying down of arms," the Ukrainska Pravda news portal cited Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk as saying. "We have already informed the Russian side about this."

7:30 a.m. Shelling hit residential houses and a shopping district in Kyiv's Podil district late on Sunday, killing at least one person, Mayor Vitali Klitschko says. "According to the information we have at the moment, several homes and one of the shopping centers [were hit]," Klitschko says on his Telegram channel. He says rescue teams are putting out a large fire at the shopping center, while other details are still to be confirmed.

5:21 a.m. Management of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, site of the world's worst nuclear accident in 1986, says that 50 staff members who had been on the job since the plant was seized by Russian forces on Feb. 24 have been rotated out and replaced. Officials had repeatedly expressed alarm that the staff was suffering exhaustion after weeks of

forced, unrelieved work and that this endangered the decommissioned plant's safety.

2:40 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praises Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system and calls for Israeli support in defending his own countries' cities.

"We are turning to you and asking whether it is better to provide help or mediation without choosing a side," Zelenskyy says in an address to lawmakers in the Knesset, Israel's parliament.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. © Reuters

2:00 a.m. Russia and Ukraine have moved closer to an agreement on issues "critical" to a hoped-for cease-fire, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu tells Turkey's Hurriyet newspaper.

"We observe that they almost agreed on the first four articles, but decisions on some issues need to be given at the leaders level," the foreign minister says in an interview.

Earlier, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told CNN he was ready for talks with Russia's Vladimir Putin.

twitter:https://twitter.com/CNN/status/1505552688355979266

1:31 a.m. Qatar is in discussions over the long-term supply of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Germany, QatarEnergy says in a statement. Germany told Qatar it was fast tracking two terminals to facilitate LNG shipments, the state-owned company says.

12:29 a.m. Accounts that thousands of residents in Ukraine's besieged port city Mariupol have been forcibly deported to Russia are "disturbing" and "unconscionable" if true, says Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Thomas-Greenfield tells CNN's "State of the Union" that the U.S. has not confirmed the allegations made Saturday by Mariupol's city council via its Telegram channel.

12:15 a.m. Meeting in Phnom Penh, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Cambodian leader Hun Sen have agreed that Russia's invasion of Ukraine violates the United Nations Charter. But the joint statement issued after their talks neither mentioned Russia by name nor condemned its assault.

The two leaders called for an immediate end to hostilities and a withdrawal of armed forces from Ukrainian territory. Read more.

Tuesday, March 22

11:50 p.m. "Italy wants Ukraine to join the EU," Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi tells Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, taking a clear stand on the war-torn nation's hope of becoming a European Union member.

Draghi's endorsement comes after Zelenskyy addresses the Italian parliament by video.

"Today, Ukraine does not just defend itself," Draghi says. "It defends our peace, our freedom, our security. It defends that multilateral order based on rules and rights that we have painstakingly built up since the war."

6:52 p.m. Zhang Hanhui, China's ambassador to Russia, met several Chinese businessmen in Moscow on Sunday, and "instructed" them how to seize the opportunities in the current "crisis" and adjust their business structure to "fill the void" in the Russian market, according to a WeChat post by the Russia Confucius Culture Promotion Association.

"The current international situation is complex. Large enterprises are facing great difficulties in trade settlement and some of them even get disrupted in the supply chain. This is the time for Chinese private, and small and medium-sized enterprises to play a role. The Chinese government has been trying to adjust various channels, in a timely manner, to form a new platform to solve the problems of trade settlement and logistics," Zhang says.

5:57 p.m. Britain's defense ministry says Russian forces have not managed to take over the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol despite weeks of bombardment and days of street fighting. In an update posted on social media, U.K. officials

say that "despite heavy fighting, Ukrainian forces continue to repulse Russian attempts to occupy" the city. It says Russian forces have made "limited progress" elsewhere in Ukraine in the last day, and remain "largely stalled in place."

The Ukrainian military says it is still defending Mariupol and had destroyed a Russian patrol boat and an electronic warfare complex. But the defense ministry said Russia for now controls the land corridor from Crimea, the peninsula it annexed in 2014, and is blocking Ukraine's access to the Sea of Azov.

5:53 p.m. United Nations' Refugee Agency says 3,528,346 Ukrainians have now fled the country, with more than 2 million crossing the border into Poland.

5:53 p.m. One of Putin's main priorities is to take control of the capital Kyiv but trying to do so will be "suicide," Ukrainian adviser to the president Oleksiy Arestovych says in a televised interview. He also says active hostilities between Ukraine and Russia could end within 2 to 3 weeks.

2:06 p.m. Ukraine's army says early Tuesday that it had forced Russian troops out of a strategically important Kyiv suburb following a fierce battle. The regained territory allowed Ukrainian forces to retake control of a key highway to the west and block Russian troops from surrounding Kyiv from the northwest.

But Ukraine's Defense Ministry says Russian forces battling toward Kyiv were able to partially take other northwest suburbs, Bucha, Hostomel and Irpin, some of which had been under attack almost since Feb. 24 when Russia began its invasion.

Russian forces are increasingly concentrating their air power and artillery on Ukraine's cities and targeting civilians, killing many and sending millions fleeing.

9:00 a.m. Russian accusations that Kyiv has biological and chemical weapons are false and illustrate that Russian President Vladimir Putin is considering using them himself in his war against Ukraine, U.S. President Joe Biden says, without citing evidence. Putin's "back is against the wall and now he's talking about new false flags he's setting up including, asserting that we in America have biological as well as chemical weapons in Europe, simply not true," Biden said at a Business Roundtable event. "They are also suggesting that Ukraine has biological and chemical weapons in Ukraine. That's a clear sign he's considering using both of those."

8:00 a.m. S&P Global Ratings says it will withdraw ratings for all Russian entities before April 15. The decision comes weeks after parent company S&P Global said it was suspending commercial operations in Russia, joining a global exodus of companies out of the country due to tightening economic sanctions over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

6:58 a.m. A court in Moscow formally bans Meta Platforms from doing business in Russia over "extremist" activities. The court does not ban Meta's WhatsApp messenger service, instead focusing on the U.S. tech giant's already-blocked Facebook and Instagram social networking services.

5:30 a.m. Russia's growing censorship of the war in Ukraine is forcing independent voices into silence, says Galina Timchenko, a Russian journalist and CEO of the independent news website Meduza.

"The administration is using propaganda to paint a picture of a united Russia," Timchenko tells Nikkei in a recent interview.

Timchenko founded Meduza in the Latvian capital of Riga in 2014 after she was fired as chief editor of a major Russian news website. Meduza is now one of the few Russia-focused outlets to call the conflict in Ukraine a "war" instead of a "special military operation," the description used by the Kremlin. Read more.

5:00 a.m. The International Chess Federation (FIDE) disqualifies Sergey Karjakin from FIDE-rated competitions for six months, after its Ethics and Disciplinary Commission convicts the grandmaster of acts that cast the game "in an unjustifiable unfavorable light and in this way damage its reputation." On social media, Karjakin had supported the invasion and accused the Ukrainian side of genocide.

The Chess Federation of Russia says it will appeal the decision and asks FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich "to take the matter under personal control."

Karjakin and Dvorkovich are affiliated with the Russian chess federation, according to FIDE. Dvorkovich, a former senior Kremlin official, has condemned the invasion.

3:53 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says any compromises with Russia to end the war would need to be voted on by Ukrainians in a referendum. "The people will have to speak up and respond to this or that form of compromise," he says in an interview published by Ukrainian public broadcasting company Suspilne.

Such issues could concern territories occupied by Russian forces, including Crimea, or security guarantees offered to Ukraine by countries in lieu of NATO membership, he said.

3:38 a.m. President Joe Biden urges U.S. partners in the private sector "to harden your cyber defenses immediately," as the White House warns of "evolving intelligence" that Russia is exploring options for potential cyberattacks. Everyone needs "to do their part to meet one of the defining threats of our time," he says.

1:39 a.m. European Union foreign ministers disagree on whether and how to slap sanctions on Russia's lucrative energy sector over its invasion of Ukraine. While some call for targeting Russian oil, as the U.S. and Britain have done, other EU members such as Germany say the bloc remains too dependent on Russian oil.

12:40 a.m. The Russian Foreign Ministry on Monday says it will withdraw from negotiations with Japan for a peace treaty to formally end World War II hostilities in response to sanctions over the war in Ukraine.

Japan, along with the U.S. and Europe, have imposed far-reaching economic penalties on Russia following the invasion. Japan is damaging Russian interests by taking an "openly unfriendly" stance toward the country, the ministry says in its statement. Read more.

Wednesday, March 23

11:55 p.m. NATO has plans to provide Ukraine with equipment for defending against chemical and nuclear weapons, the head of the alliance Jens Stoltenberg says.

The defensive equipment would be part of additional support expected to be agreed upon Thursday by NATO leaders in Brussels, Stoltenberg says.

Nestle Says the Focus of its Russian Businesses Since the Ukraine Invasion Is on "Providing Essential Food ... Not on Making a Profit." © Reuters

11:00 p.m. KitKat, Nesquik and other Nestle brands will be suspended in Russia, the global food group says.

"We have already halted non-essential imports and exports into and out of Russia, stopped all advertising, and suspended all capital investment in the country," Nestle says in an update on its Russian activities. The company says the focus of its businesses there since the Ukraine invasion is on "providing essential food ... not on making a profit."

10:00 p.m. Russia will seek payment in rubles for gas sold to "unfriendly" countries, President Vladimir Putin says, and European gas prices soare on concerns the move would exacerbate the region's energy crunch. European nations and the U.S. have imposed heavy sanctions on Russia since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24. But Europe depends heavily on Russian gas for heating and power generation, and the European Union is split on whether to sanction Russia's energy sector.

9:30 p.m. Japan's top oil refiners Eneos Holdings and Idemitsu Kosan are halting Russian crude oil imports after the fulfillment of current contracts, as sanctions on Russia have made it hard to conduct business and also as companies come under pressure to boycott the country. Japan imported about 13.3 million kiloliters of crude oil in January, of which 4.3% were from Russia.

7:00 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warns Japanese lawmakers in a virtual speech that Russia was escalating its attacks on Ukraine, including possibly employing chemical or nuclear weapons, as he called for tougher sanctions.

"I have received reports that Russia is preparing chemical attacks by using chemical weapons such as sarin," he tells Japan's parliament. "How would the world react if nuclear weapons are used is also now discussed around the world." Read more.

5:43 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says sending peacekeepers to Ukraine may lead to a direct confrontation between Russia and NATO. Poland last week suggested sending an international peacekeeping mission to help Ukraine defend itself.

4:38 p.m. Russia's ambassador to Indonesia, which holds the rotating chair of the Group of 20, says President Vladimir Putin intends to travel to Bali for the G-20 summit in November.

"It will depend on many, many things, including the COVID situation, that is getting better," ambassador Lyudmila Vorobieva tells reporters. "So far, his intention is ... he wants to."

Asked about suggestions Russia could be excluded from the G-20, she said it was a forum to discuss economic issues and not a crisis like Ukraine. "Of course expulsion of Russia from this kind of forum will not help these economic problems to be resolved. On the contrary, without Russia it would be difficult to do so."

4:12 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will participate virtually in a NATO summit Thursday to discuss the war with Russia, Interfax Ukraine cites Zelenskyy's press spokesman as saying. Zelenskyy will make a video address to the meeting and might join the full discussion, Interfax said.

12:20 a.m. NATO members are debating how best to express concern over possible Chinese cooperation with Russia in a joint statement after an extraordinary summit Thursday, amid fears that military and financial support from Beijing could reinvigorate Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

A European diplomat with direct knowledge of the draft process says that "the joint communique will mention concerns about China's potential military support to Russia." Talks are ongoing about whether it will include

language regarding consequences for any such actions, the diplomat says. Read more.

Thursday, March 24

12:30 p.m. The U.S. State Department says Russia has begun the process of expelling several more diplomats from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. The department said that on Wednesday it received a list of diplomats who have been declared “persona non grata” by the Russian foreign ministry. It didn't say how many diplomats were affected by the order, which generally results in the expulsion of those targeted within 72 hours. The foreign ministry summoned U.S. Ambassador John Sullivan on Monday to protest President Joe Biden’s description of Russian President Vladimir Putin as a “war criminal” over the invasion of Ukraine.

11:00 a.m. Russia's communications regulator has blocked Google's news aggregator service, accusing it of allowing access to what it calls fake material about the country's military operation in Ukraine, the Interfax news agency says. "We’ve confirmed that some people are having difficulty accessing the Google News app and website in Russia and that this is not due to any technical issues on our end," Google said in statement. "We’ve worked hard to keep information services like News accessible to people in Russia for as long as possible."

10:35 a.m. Japan has no clue yet about how Russia would carry out its claim to seek payment in rubles for energy sold to "unfriendly" countries, the finance minister says. "Currently we're looking into the situation with relevant ministries, as we don't quite understand what is [Russia's] intention and how they would do this," Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki said in a parliament session.

8:30 a.m. The World Health Organization says it has verified 64 instances of attacks on health care in Ukraine between Feb. 24 and March 21, resulting in 15 deaths and 37 injuries. Close to 7 million Ukrainians have been internally displaced in the one month of war, with 1 in 3 of them suffering from a chronic health condition, according to the global health agency.

3:50 a.m. "Based on information currently available, the U.S. government assesses that members of Russia's forces have committed war crimes in Ukraine," Secretary of State Antony Blinken says in a statement.

While acknowledging that "a court of law with jurisdiction over the crime is ultimately responsible for determining criminal guilt in specific cases" of alleged war crimes, Blinken says the U.S. government "will share information we gather with allies, partners, and international institutions and organizations, as appropriate." Read more.

2:35 a.m. One of the Kremlin's faces to the world, Russian President Vladimir Putin's special climate envoy Anatoly Chubais, has resigned.

Chubais quit of his own accord, Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov tells the Financial Times, without saying whether the move came in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Bloomberg first reported the resignation. Chubais, an architect of Russia's post-Soviet economic overhaul and an oligarch in his own right, served as first deputy prime minister under President Boris Yeltsin in the 1990s.

Russia's Anatoly Chubais Attends a Session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in June 2021. He Had Serves as President Vladimir Putin's Special Representative for Relations With International Organizations To Achieve Sustainable Development Goals © Reuters

2:00 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett have spoken again, this time by phone.

"Bennett shared his assessment of the situation around Ukraine, considering his recent contacts with leaders of several foreign countries, and expressed some ideas in relation to the negotiating process between Russian and Ukrainian representatives," Interfax reports, citing the Russian presidential press service.

12:50 a.m. Russia's invasion of Ukraine shows that "full-fledged war is an instrument of their policy, and therefore we have to be prepared to confront such a reality," Deividas Matulionis, Lithuania's ambassador to NATO, tells Nikkei ahead of the alliance's summit in Brussels on Thursday.

The meeting is expected to cover not only the Ukraine conflict, but also bolstering the defenses of former Soviet states in Eastern Europe and the Baltic region that many fear may be in Russia's sights as well. These include Lithuania, which borders the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad as well as Belarus, where Moscow holds growing sway. Read more.

Friday, March 25

11:55 p.m. Ukraine is likely to be on the agenda for a meeting of Quad leaders being planned for April. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, the summit host, has reached out to U.S. President Joe Biden on a possible visit to Japan for the talks involving Australia and India.

11:00 p.m. Moscow reacts to talk of excluding Russia from the Group of 20.

Russian presidential press secretary Dmitry Peskov says the G-20 format is "important," but "in the current conditions, as most of the participants in this format are in a state of economic war with us at their own initiative, nothing deadly harmful will happen" if Russia is left out.

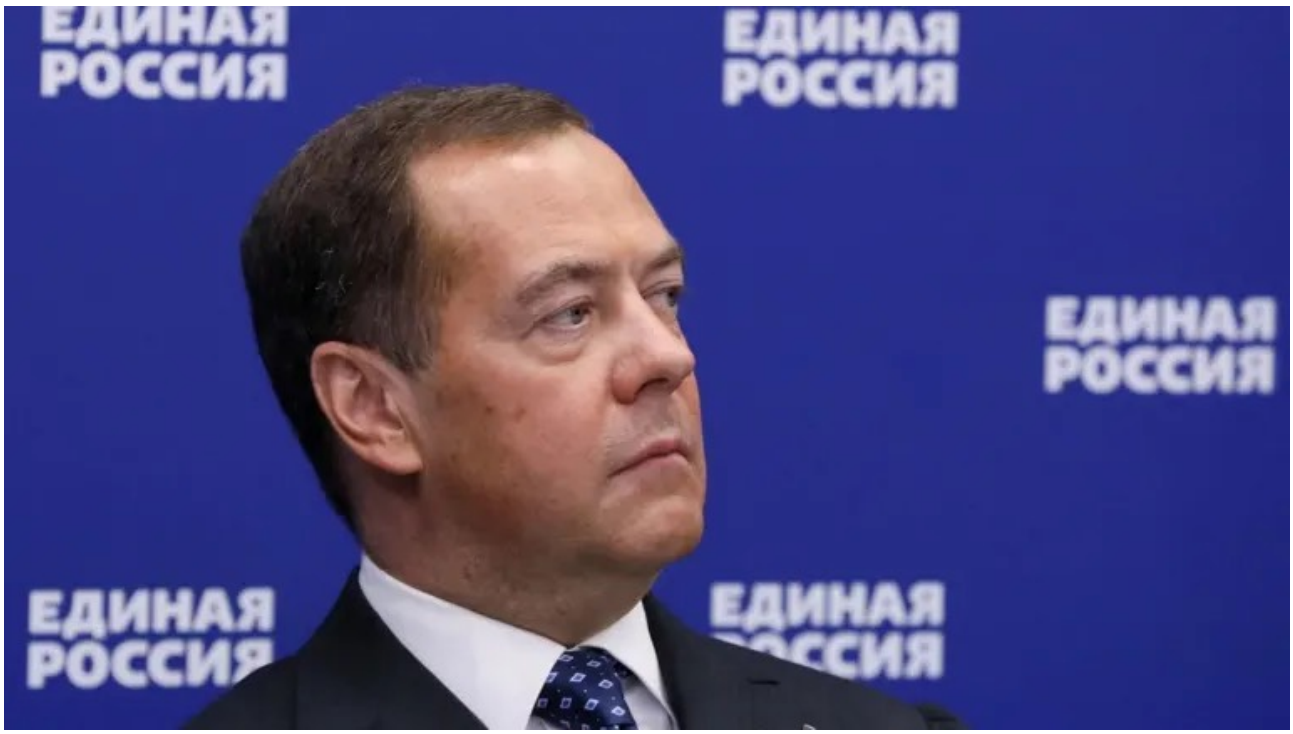
Peskov's comments were reported by Interfax.

10:19 p.m. U.S. President Joe Biden lands in Rzeszow, Poland, to assess humanitarian efforts to help some of the millions of Ukrainian refugees fleeing their country and talk to American troops shoring up NATO's defenses.

A Man Looks on From a Cultural Center Destroyed in Shelling Earlier This Month in the Village of Byshiv Outside Kyiv on March 24. © Reuters

5:04 p.m. Russia's armed forces destroyed a major fuel depot outside Kyiv in a missile strike, the country's defense ministry says. Spokesman Igor Konashenkov said the strike happened on Thursday evening, using Kalibr cruise missiles fired from sea. Konashenkov said the depot was used to supply Ukraine's armed forces in the center of the country.

4:40 p.m. Rescuers were searching for survivors among debris on Friday after two missiles hit a Ukrainian military unit on the outskirts of the city of Dnipro, causing "serious destruction," regional governor Valentyn Reznychenko said on social media.



Russian Ex-President Dmitry Medvedev Was Quoted as Saying on Friday That It Is "Foolish" To Believe Western Sanctions Could Have any Effect on the Moscow Government. © Reuters

1:40 p.m. It is "foolish" to believe that Western sanctions against Russian businesses could have any effect on the Moscow government, Russian ex-President and Deputy Head of the country's Security Council Dmitry Medvedev was quoted as saying on Friday. The sanctions will only consolidate Russian society and not cause popular discontent with the authorities, Medvedev told Russia's RIA news agency in an interview.

"Let us ask ourselves: can any of these major businessmen have even the tiniest quantum of influence of the position of the country's leadership?" Medvedev said. "I openly tell you: no, no way."

1:25 p.m. Four Russian officials, including hackers with a government intelligence agency, have been charged with the malicious hacking of critical infrastructure around the globe including the U.S. energy and aviation sectors between 2012

and 2018, the U.S. Justice Department and British Foreign Office say. Among the thousands of computers targeted in some 135 countries were machines at a Kansas nuclear power plant -- whose business network was compromised -- and at a Saudi petrochemical plant in 2017 where the hackers overrode safety controls, officials say.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Says Ukrainians "Need To Achieve Peace" and Halt the Russian Bombardment That Has Forced Millions To Flee to Countries Like Poland. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service/Handout via Reuters)

10:30 a.m. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says that Ukrainians "need to achieve peace" and halt the Russian bombardment that has forced millions to flee to countries like Poland, where U.S. President Joe Biden is due to visit and witness the crisis first hand. Appearing exhausted in a brief video address early on Friday, Zelenskyy said he had made appeals to Western leaders "all for one reason -- so that Russia understands that we need to achieve peace. Russia also needs to achieve peace."

6:10 a.m. The U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly approves a resolution blaming Russia for the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and urging an immediate cease-fire and protection for millions of civilians and the homes, schools and hospitals critical to their survival. There was loud applause in the assembly chamber as the result of the vote was announced: 140-5 with only Belarus, Syria, North Korea and Eritrea joining Russia in opposing the measure. There were 38 abstentions, including Russian ally China, India, South Africa, Iran and Cuba.

4:40 a.m. "The Russian invasion of Ukraine has put an end to the globalization we have experienced over the last three decades," BlackRock CEO Larry Fink writes in his annual letter to shareholders of the world's largest asset manager.

Fink predicts "companies and governments will also be looking more broadly at their dependencies on other nations. This may lead companies to onshore or nearshore more of their operations, resulting in a faster pull back from some countries." Read more.

Russian President Vladimir Putin. U.S. President Joe Biden Said He Thinks Russia Should Be Excluded From the G-20. © Reuters

3:30 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden says he thinks Russia should be removed from the Group of 20, or if that fails, Ukraine should be allowed to participate in meetings. Biden acknowledges that such a decision "depends on the G-20." This year's G-20 president, Indonesia, has indicated it plans to let Russia stay in the grouping.

2:49 a.m. China understands its economic future is more closely tied to the West than to Russia, U.S. President Joe Biden says on the sidelines of emergency meetings in Europe, after warning Beijing it could face consequences for aiding Moscow's war in Ukraine.

"I made no threats, but I made it clear to him -- made sure he understood the consequences of helping Russia," Biden said of a recent conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

A Service Member of Pro-Russian Troops Walks Past a Truck Painted With the Letter "Z" in the Separatist-Controlled Donetsk Region on March 1. © Reuters

1:12 a.m. Leaders of the Group of Seven industrialized nations warn Russia not to use biological, chemical or nuclear weapons in its war with Ukraine, in their statement after summit talks in Brussels. All countries are ready to welcome refugees from Ukraine, they say.

12:40 a.m. The 193-member U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly demands aid access and civilian protection in Ukraine and criticizes Russia for creating a "dire" humanitarian situation with its invasion a month ago.

The resolution, drafted by Ukraine and allies, received 140 votes in favor and 5 votes against -- Russia, Syria, North Korean, Eritrea and Belarus -- while 38 countries abstained, including China and India.

12:30 a.m. Ukraine says it has destroyed a large Russian landing support ship, the Orsk, at the Russian-occupied port of Berdiansk on the Sea of Azov.

Video footage shows a column of smoke rising from a blaze at a dock, and the flash of an explosion.

Two vessels, one of which appeared to have been damaged, were seen in the footage sailing out of the dock as a third ship burned.

Saturday, March 26

8:56 p.m. Ukraine received additional security pledges from the United States on developing defense cooperation, its Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba says. "We did receive additional promises from the United States on how our defense cooperation will evolve," Kuleba tells reporters.

7:06 p.m. More than 100,000 people still need to be evacuated from the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol, Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says on national television.

6:53 p.m. Ukraine's Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov says that he and Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba had held a joint meeting with their U.S. counterparts for the first time. "We discuss current issues & cooperation in political and defense directions between Ukraine and the United States," Reznikov says on Twitter, posting a photograph of the meeting in Warsaw with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin.

5:54 p.m. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu was seen chairing an army meeting and discussing weapons supplies in a video posted by his ministry, the first time he had publicly been shown speaking for more than two weeks. In the video, uploaded on social media, Shoigu said he had discussed issues related to the military budget and defense orders with the finance ministry.

5:25 p.m. Russian forces have taken control of the town of Slavutych, where workers at the defunct Chernobyl nuclear plant live, the governor of the Kyiv region Oleksandr Pavlyuk says. In an online statement, Pavlyuk says Russian

troops had occupied the hospital in Slavutych and kidnapped the mayor.

3:46 p.m. The war in Ukraine has killed 136 children in the 31 days since the start of the Russian invasion, Ukraine's office of the prosecutor-general said on Saturday in a message on the Telegram app. Of the total, 64 children have been killed in the Kyiv region, the office said. A further 50 children have died in the Donetsk region, it said. Additionally, 199 children have been wounded.

10:39 a.m. About 300 people were killed in the Russian airstrike last week on a Mariupol theater that was being used as a shelter, Ukrainian authorities say, in what would make it the war's deadliest known attack on civilians yet. The bloodshed at the theater fueled allegations Moscow is committing war crimes by killing civilians, whether deliberately or by indiscriminate fire.

Service Members of Pro-Russian Troops Are Seen Atop of an Armored Vehicle With the Symbols "Z" Painted on its Sides in Dokuchaievsk in the Donetsk Region, Ukraine. © Reuters

3:30 a.m. A senior Russian military official says that the first phase of its "special operation" -- Moscow's name for the invasion of Ukraine -- has been mostly completed and that the focus is now on the eastern Donbas region.

"The military capacities of Ukraine's armed forces have been significantly decreased, which allows efforts to be focused on achieving our main aim: liberating Donbas," Sergei Rudskoy says, referring to a region where Russian-backed separatists have declared themselves "republics." Ukraine does not recognize their independence.

Russia's hints at a potential scaling back of its territorial ambitions in Ukraine come amid reports of military setbacks. Russian forces no longer have full control of Kherson, the first major Ukrainian city they captured, The New York Times reports, citing a senior Pentagon official.

U.S. President Joe Biden Is Welcomed By Polish Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak As He Arrives At Rzeszow-Jasionka Airport In Poland. © Reuters

2:55 a.m. Zelenskyy gives an update on his latest talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1507410351889215490

1:30 a.m. The U.S. aims to supply 15 billion cu. meters of liquefied natural gas to the European Union this year to help ease its dependence on Russian energy. Read more

Sunday, March 27

9:30 p.m. The U.S. has no strategy of regime change for Russia, Secretary of State Antony Blinken tells reporters in Jerusalem. "I think the president, the White House, made the point last night that, quite simply, President [Vladimir] Putin cannot be empowered to wage war or engage in aggression against Ukraine or anyone else," Blinken says.

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Right, Shakes Hands With U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken After Their Meeting in Jerusalem on March 27. © Reuters

"As you know, and as you've heard us say repeatedly, we do not have a strategy of regime change in Russia -- or anywhere else, for that matter," he adds. "In this case, as in any case, it's up to the people of the country in question. It's up to the Russian people."

3:37 p.m. Ukraine and Russia have agreed on two "humanitarian corridors" to evacuate civilians from front-

line areas on Sunday local time, including allowing people to leave by private car from the southern city of Mariupol, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says.

3:52 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden says in Poland that Russian President Vladimir Putin "cannot remain in power" in a comment soon walked back by a White House official. "The president's point was that Putin cannot be allowed to exercise power over his neighbors or the region," the official says. "He was not discussing Putin's power in Russia, or regime change."

Biden's comments, including an earlier one in which he called Putin a "butcher," mark a sharp verbal escalation in the American approach to Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

Monday, March 28

11:45 p.m. International brewers Heineken and Carlsberg say they plan to exit Russia, joining other big consumer brands.

Carlsberg has more exposure to Russia than any of its peers, the Financial Times reports. The country makes 9% of its revenue in the country and employs 8,400 people there.

10:01 p.m. Russia's Novaya Gazeta newspaper, whose editor Dmitry Muratov was a co-winner of last year's Nobel Peace Prize, is suspending online and print activities until the end of Russia's "special operation" in Ukraine. The investigative paper, which already removed material from its website on Russia's military action in Ukraine to comply with a new media law, says it received another warning from the state communications regulator about its reporting, prompting it to pause operations.

6:22 p.m. Chinese state energy company Sinopec will continue to buy crude oil and gas from Russia, a top executive says, even as Western democracies step up sanctions in response to the country's invasion of Ukraine. The company, known formally as China Petroleum and Chemical, is involved in two major projects in Russia: an oil and gas production joint venture called Taihu in the Volga-Ural petroleum basin, and the development of the Amur gas chemical complex and processing plant with Sibur in the Russian Far East, adjoining China.

6:19 p.m. The Kremlin says that peace talks between Russia and Ukraine may get underway in Turkey on Tuesday and said it was important that the talks would be held face-to-face despite scant progress in negotiations so far. Russian

President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan agreed in a telephone call on Sunday for Istanbul to host the talks, which Ankara hopes will lead to a cease-fire in Ukraine.

5:36 p.m. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and echoed calls for an immediate cease-fire made by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which Cambodia currently chairs. In his remarks, Hun Sen invoked Cambodia's own history of occupation by Vietnam and cast doubt on Russia's ability to capture the Ukrainian capital Kyiv.

4:59 p.m. Ukrainian and Russian negotiators will begin peace talks in Istanbul later Monday, a senior Turkish official said, without elaborating. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, agreed in a telephone call on Sunday for Istanbul to host the talks, which Ankara hopes will lead to a cease-fire.

4:54 p.m. Russian forces are regrouping but are unable to advance anywhere in Ukraine, Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar says. Russian forces were trying to reinforce positions they already hold and were trying to break through the defenses of Kyiv but had no hope of capturing the capital, she says.

4:48 p.m. Ukraine has no plans to open any humanitarian corridors to evacuate civilians from besieged cities on Monday because of intelligence reports warning of possible Russian "provocations" along the routes, Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says.

4:35 p.m. The mayor of Mariupol says all civilians must be evacuated from the encircled Ukrainian city to allow them to escape a humanitarian catastrophe. Mayor Vadym Boichenko says 160,000 civilians were still trapped in the southern port city on the Sea of Azov without heat and power after weeks of Russian bombardment.

He says 26 buses were waiting to evacuate civilians from Mariupol, which normally has a population of about 400,000 people, but Russian forces had not agreed to give them safe passage. He did not say where they were waiting.

4:04 p.m. Chinese drone maker DJI has dismissed as "utterly false" accusations that the Russian military is using its drones in Ukraine after a German retailer cited such information as the reason for taking its products off the shelves. The rejection followed Friday's Twitter revelation of the removal by German electronics and home appliances giant MediaMarkt in response to "information from various sources," although it gave no details on the information it had received.

2:08 p.m. Japan will revise its foreign exchange law to prevent Russia from evading financial sanctions via cryptocurrency assets. A proposed revision to the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act will be submitted to the Diet to deter Russia from dodging sanctions, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said at a news conference. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida also called on Monday for the law to be amended, stressing the need for coordinated actions with Western allies after attending last week's Group of Seven summit in Belgium.

11:23 a.m. Hollywood shared some of its big night with Ukrainians on Sunday, using text on a screen to ask the

world for financial contributions. But rather than turning the Academy Awards into a platform about Ukraine, the show's directors opted for a silent message that did not mention Russia, which invaded Ukraine 31 days ago. "We'd like to have a moment of silence to show our support for the people of Ukraine currently facing invasion, conflict and prejudice within their own borders," read the message posted on screen just before a commercial break.

11:11 a.m. Russian forces have left the Ukrainian town of Slavutych, home to workers at the defunct nuclear plant of Chernobyl, after completing their surveying task, the mayor says. On Saturday, the Kyiv regional governor said Russian forces had taken control of the town just outside the safety exclusion zone around Chernobyl, site of the world's worst nuclear disaster in 1986, where Ukrainian staff still manage the plant.

6:51 a.m. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz says that neither NATO nor U.S. President Joe Biden aims to bring about regime change in Russia. Biden said of Russian President Vladimir Putin during a speech on Saturday that "this man cannot remain in power." The White House and other U.S. officials rushed to clarify that Biden was not actually calling for Putin to be toppled. Asked during a Sunday appearance on ARD television whether Putin's removal is in fact the real aim, Scholz replied: "This is not the aim of NATO, and also not that of the American president," adding, "We both agree completely that regime change is not an object and aim of policy that we pursue together."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan Speaks At A News Conference After A NATO Summit In Brussels On March 24. © Reuters

3:09 a.m. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan tells Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin that a cease-fire and better humanitarian conditions are needed. "Stressing the need for the immediate establishment of cease fire and peace between Russia and Ukraine as well as the amelioration of the humanitarian situation in the region, President Erdogan stated that Turkiye would continue to lend every kind of support regarding the process," Erdogan's office says in a Twitter thread about the phone call, using Turkey's new English rendition of its own name.

Erdogan and Putin agree that the next round of negotiations between Ukraine and Russia will be held in Istanbul.

3:08 a.m. Ukraine is prepared to discuss adopting a neutral status as part of a peace deal with Russia, but it

would have to be guaranteed by third parties and put to a referendum, Zelenskyy says in an interview.

Speaking to a group of Russian journalists via video call, Zelenskyy says the invasion caused the destruction of Russian-speaking cities in Ukraine and says the damage exceeded that from the Russian wars in Chechnya.

1:51 a.m. Russia's communications watchdog tells Russian media not to report on an interview done with Zelenskyy and says it has started a probe into the outlets that had interviewed him.

In a short statement distributed by the watchdog on social media and posted on its website, it says a host of Russian outlets had done an interview with Zelenskyy.

"Roskomnadzor warns the Russian media about the necessity of refraining from publishing this interview," it says. It does not give a reason for its warning.

Tuesday, March 29

10:40 p.m. The Ukraine invasion has triggered the dismissals of some brilliant Russian musical figures from the classical scene in the West. In some cases, the firings have been sudden. Russian maestro Valery Gergiev was sacked as chief conductor of the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra on March 1.

After Russia had invaded Ukraine, Munich Mayor Dieter Reiter immediately presented the Russian conductor an ultimatum. Either "clearly and unequivocally distance himself" from Russia's "special military operation" or leave.

"I had hoped that he would reconsider his very positive assessment of Russian President Vladimir Putin," the mayor said in his March 1 announcement. "He has not done so." Read more.

9:57 p.m. The Russia-Ukraine negotiations in Istanbul have concluded, host Turkey says Tuesday, adding that the peace talks will not continue for a second day.

9:40 p.m. Ukraine proposes adopting neutral status, in the first sign of progress toward negotiating peace in its talks with Russia.

Under the proposals, Kyiv would agree not to join alliances or host bases of foreign troops, but would have security guaranteed in terms similar to "Article 5," the collective defense clause of the trans-Atlantic NATO military alliance, negotiators from Kyiv say.

They named Israel and NATO members Canada, Poland and Turkey as countries that may give such guarantees. Russia, the U.S., Britain, Germany and Italy also could be involved.

9:21 p.m. Russia will curtail military activity around the Ukrainian cities of Kyiv and Chernihiv, its deputy defense minister says, after talks between Russian and Ukrainian negotiating teams in Istanbul. The official, Alexander Fomin, says the decision was taken in the interest of creating mutual trust and the conditions for further talks.

6:00 p.m. Ukraine's president has spoken with South Korea's incoming leader.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1508729909950226440

6:30 p.m. Russian and Ukrainian negotiators have begun the first direct peace talks in more than two weeks on Tuesday in Istanbul, with the surprise attendance of Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich who is sanctioned by the West over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. The two teams sat facing each other at a long table in the presidential office, with the Russian oligarch sitting in the front row of observers, a Turkish presidential video feed showed. Two of Abramovich's superyachts are docked at Turkish resorts.

5:00 p.m. Russia's Foreign Ministry called in the ambassadors of the three Baltic nations on Tuesday to announce the expulsion of some of their diplomats in a tit-for-tat move, the TASS and RIA news agencies cited a source as saying. Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania expelled a total of 10 Russian diplomats in a coordinated move earlier this month.

4:10 p.m. Progress in talks between Russian and Ukrainian negotiators starting in Istanbul on Tuesday would pave the way for a meeting of the countries' two leaders, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the delegations ahead of the talks. In a televised speech to the negotiators in Istanbul, Erdogan said the time has come for talks to yield concrete results and called for an immediate cease-fire, saying that "stopping this tragedy" was up to both sides.

3:00 p.m. German consumer sentiment looks set to slump heading into April as the war in Ukraine pushed households' economic and income expectations to their lowest since the 2009 financial crisis, a survey shows. The GfK institute said its consumer sentiment index, based on a survey of around 2,000 Germans, tumbled to -15.5 points heading into April, down from a revised -8.5 points a month earlier, the lowest reading since February 2021.

Japan Will Ban the Export of Luxury Goods to Russia, Including Luxury Cars, From April 5 in its Latest Response to the Russian Invasion of Ukraine. © Reuters

10:30 a.m. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno says Japanese companies will be requested to refuse if Russia asks for payments in rubles, especially in the energy sector. Russia demanded last week that "unfriendly" countries must pay in rubles, not euros, for its gas in the wake of the United States and European allies teaming up on a series of sanctions aimed at Russia.

10:00 a.m. Japan will ban the export of luxury goods to Russia in its latest response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, effective April 5, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry says in a statement. Prohibited items include luxury cars, motorcycles, liquors, cosmetics, fashion items and art pieces.

6:45 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden offers an explanation for his eyebrow-raising exclamation Sunday that Russian President Vladimir Putin "cannot remain in power."

"I wasn't then nor am I now articulating a policy change," Biden tells reporters at the White House. "I was expressing moral outrage that I felt, and I make no apologies."

5:15 a.m. Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich, the owner of the Chelsea Football Club, suffered symptoms of poisoning in Kyiv in early March after peace talks with Russia, the Financial Times reports, citing three people familiar with the matter.

Two Ukrainians involved in the talks also suffered symptoms. Abramovich's eyesight "completely disappeared" for several hours, the Financial Times reports.

"We did not identify the substance," the newspaper quotes a person close to Zelenskyy as saying. "No idea who was

behind [the attack] -- but it looks like Roman was the main target."

The suspected poisoning was first reported by The Wall Street Journal.

A Local Resident Cries Before Leaving the Besieged Southern Port of Mariupol, Ukraine, on March 27: the City's Mayor Says all Citizens Must Be Evacuated To Avoid a Humanitarian Catastrophe. © Reuters

4:30 a.m. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba says the country's most ambitious goal at talks with Russia in Turkey this week is to agree on a cease-fire. "The minimum program will be humanitarian questions, and the maximum program is reaching an agreement on a cease-fire," he said on national television when asked about the scope of the latest round of peace negotiations, expected to kick off Tuesday. "We are not trading people, land or sovereignty."

3:08 a.m. U.S. lawmakers are probing Credit Suisse Group's compliance with sanctions related to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, asking the Swiss bank to provide documents tied to the financing of yachts and jets owned by

potentially sanctioned individuals, according to a letter sent by a House of Representatives committee to the bank's chief executive, Thomas Gottstein.

The probe comes after the Financial Times reported this month that Credit Suisse asked hedge funds and other investors to destroy documents relating to its richest clients' yachts and private jets in an attempt to stop information leaking about loans to oligarchs who were later sanctioned.

2:00 a.m. The exodus of many of the world's top brands from Russia in protest of the country's invasion of Ukraine has created a cottage industry in patent applications for strikingly similar logos. They include one that looks like McDonald's golden arches turned on their side and a blue-and-yellow IKEA look-alike. Read more.

12:30 a.m. Group of Seven economies will reject Russia's demand to pay for natural gas in rubles, their energy ministers have agreed in an online meeting, according to Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that only "unfriendly" countries would have to pay for Russian energy in rubles. This list includes the U.S. and Japan.

These transactions have mostly been paid for in dollars and euros. Natural gas from the Japanese-backed Sakhalin-2 project has been paid for mainly in dollars.

Wednesday, March 30

11:00 p.m. Volkswagen-owned German truck-maker Man will put up to 11,000 workers in Germany on shortened hours as it struggles to secure a key component made in Ukraine.

"The war in Ukraine is leading to massive supply gaps for truck wiring harnesses at Man Truck & Bus," the company says in a statement. "As a result, since March 14 there has been a standstill in the truck plants in Munich and Krakow as well as significant production downtimes at the Nuremberg, Salzgitter and Wittlich plants."

Earlier this month, wire harness maker Sumitomo Electric Industries of Japan said it will add production lines at its Romanian and Moroccan plants, having suspended operations at its factory in western Ukraine at the end of last month.

9:00 p.m. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi tells a regional summit that recent developments in Europe have raised a question mark over the stability of the international order, but he stops short of referring directly to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Modi says it its important to make the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation's activities more active.

"It has also become essential to give greater priority to our regional security," he says in a virtual address at the meeting, hosted by current chair Sri Lanka. Read more.

8:00 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will pay a two-day visit to New Delhi starting Thursday, the Indian government says in a one-line statement on Wednesday. It is the highest-level Russian visit to India since Moscow launched an invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24. The Ukraine crisis is expected to figure prominently in Lavrov's meetings in New Delhi, even though the Indian statement did not reveal the agenda.

7:00 p.m. The Kremlin says it welcomes the fact that Kyiv has set out its demands for an end to the conflict in Ukraine in written form, but says there is no breakthrough yet. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov tells reporters that Russia has not noticed anything promising or that looked like a breakthrough, and says there is a long period of work ahead.

6:46 p.m. Russia's Federal Security Service says on Wednesday it has detained 60 supporters of what it describes as a Ukrainian "neo-Nazi" group and has seized weapons in 23 regions across Russia, news agencies report. The FSB has previously identified the alleged group as the MKU. State television in December said the abbreviation stood for "Maniacs. Cult of Murder." The FSB says the group had been set up by a Ukrainian under the patronage of Ukraine's intelligence services.

6:34 p.m. The United Nations has named three human rights experts to conduct an investigation into possible war crimes and other violations committed in Ukraine. The independent panel, to be led by Erik Mose of Norway, has a mandate to "investigate all alleged violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law and related crimes in the context of the aggression

against Ukraine by the Russian Federation," according to a statement.

6:06 p.m. Russia denies a claim by Ukraine that it had struck the town of Uman, visited by tens of thousands of Hasidic Jews each year, showing pictures of what it says are Ukrainian forces loading arms near a synagogue there. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy told Israeli lawmakers on March 20 that Russia had struck Uman on the first day of the invasion in February, according to a transcript of the speech supplied by The Times of Israel.

5:49 p.m. Russian Sports Minister Oleg Matytsin says Russia will invite "friendly countries" to take part in its national university games, at a time when its own athletes remain banned from competitions. He does not specify which countries will be invited to the event, which had been under planning since before Russia's invasion.

5:42 p.m. There are now 4,019,287 Ukrainians who have fled abroad, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

5:30 p.m. Ukraine officials report shelling around the capital Kyiv and the northern region of Chernihiv, despite a promise by Moscow to reduce military operations there. Russian forces were also shelling nearly all cities along the front separating Ukraine-controlled territory from areas held by Russian-backed separatists in the eastern Donetsk region, the regional governor says. Heavy fighting was also reported in Mariupol. Oleksiy Arestovych, an adviser to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, says Russia has been transferring forces from northern Ukraine to the east to try to encircle Ukrainian troops.

4:10 p.m. Russian forces hit industrial facilities in three overnight strikes in the Khmelnytskyi region of western Ukraine, regional governor Serhiy Hamaliy says. He gave no details of the targets but said fires had been "localized" and checks were being made to determine whether there were any casualties.

4:07 p.m. The governor of Ukraine's northern Chernihiv region says he saw no letup in Russian attacks despite a promise by Moscow to scale down military operations there. "Do we believe in [the promise]? Of course not," Gov. Viacheslav Chaus said via the Telegram messaging app. "The 'decreased activity' in the Chernihiv region was demonstrated by the enemy carrying out strikes on [the city of] Nizhyn, including airstrikes, and all night long they hit [the city of] Chernihiv."

3:50 p.m. Russia and China agree to widen cooperation at a meeting of foreign ministers in China, according to the Interfax news agency, citing Russia's foreign ministry amid what Moscow described as "difficult international conditions." Interfax says cooperation included building up foreign policy coordination and speaking with one voice on global affairs. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in the eastern Chinese province of Anhui.

3:45 p.m. Ukraine's armed forces say there is a danger of ammunition exploding at the defunct Chernobyl nuclear power station and that Russian forces occupying the plant must pull out of the area, according to Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk. She also says Ukraine had asked Russia on Tuesday to allow 97 humanitarian corridors to be established in the worst-hit towns, cities and villages. "We demand that the U.N. Security Council immediately take

measures to demilitarize the Chernobyl exclusion zone and introduce a special U.N. mission there to eliminate the risk of the repeat of a nuclear catastrophe," she said.

3:26 p.m. Shelling could be heard outside Kyiv overnight but the Ukrainian capital itself was not shelled by Russian forces, Deputy Mayor Mykola Povoroznyk says. "The night passed relatively calmly, to the sounds of sirens and the sound of gunfire from battles around the city, but there was no shelling of the city itself."

3:15 p.m. Britain will take a very skeptical view toward any promises coming from Russia about Ukraine and will respond to Moscow based on its actions, not its words, Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab says. "I would be very careful in taking at face value what is coming out of Putin's war machine," he told Times Radio, adding that room for diplomacy must still be made.

Tuesday

Thursday, March 31

11:30 p.m. The far-reaching Western sanctions on Russia following its invasion of Ukraine could push countries to form small currency blocs along trade lines, says the International Monetary Fund's Gita Gopinath.

"The dollar would remain the major global currency even in that landscape but fragmentation at a smaller level is certainly quite possible," the IMF's first deputy managing director tells the Financial Times in an interview. "We are already seeing that with some countries renegotiating the currency in which they get paid for trade."

11:00 p.m. Japan will change how it spells Kyiv in official documents to make it closer to the city's Ukrainian pronunciation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs says.

The new Japanese spelling sounds like "kiiu," while the old one was pronounced "kiefu." The Japanese spelling of Chernobyl and other geographical names has also changed.

The pronunciation of the capital is a point of pride for Ukrainians and has even spawned a Twitter hashtag, #kyivnotkiev.

8:24 p.m. Russian forces in Ukraine are not withdrawing but regrouping, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says on Thursday, commenting on Moscow's announcements about a scaling down of military operations around Kyiv. Stoltenberg also says the alliance has yet to be convinced that Russia was negotiating in good faith in peace talks in Istanbul because Moscow's military objective since launching its invasion of Ukraine has not changed.

A Mariupol Resident Stands Next to the Grave of his Friend Killed During Ukraine-Russia Conflict. © Reuters

7:00 p.m. A convoy of Ukrainian buses set out for the southern port city of Mariupol to try to deliver humanitarian supplies and bring out civilians, Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk and the Red Cross says. According to Vereshchuk, 45 buses are on their way to Mariupol after the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) confirmed Russia had agreed to open a safe corridor.

6:21 p.m. Former Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk has urged Japan to impose an embargo on Russian oil and gas, calling on Japanese companies to pull the plug on the Sakhalin-2 project in the Russian Far East in an online interview with Nikkei Asia.

6:03 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asks the Dutch parliament for weapons, reconstruction aid and to halt all business with Russia in response to its invasion of his country. "Stronger sanctions are needed so that Russia doesn't have a chance to pursue this war further in Europe,"

he told lawmakers via video link. "Stop all trade with Russia."

5:06 p.m. Japan will not abandon its stake in the Sakhalin-2 liquefied natural gas (LNG) project in Russia as it is essential to energy security, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida says, his clearest comments yet on Tokyo's plans for the development.

4:30 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tells Australia's parliament that new and stronger sanctions against Russia are needed to increase the pressure on Moscow over its invasion of his country. Australia has supplied defense equipment and humanitarian supplies to Ukraine, as well as imposing a ban on exports of alumina and aluminum ores, including bauxite, to Russia. It has imposed a total of 476 sanctions on 443 individuals, including businessmen close to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and 33 entities, including most of Russia's banking sector and all entities responsible for the country's sovereign debt.

4:17 p.m. Global computer brands are cutting their forecasts for the next six months amid concerns over inflation and the war in Ukraine, in a sign that the two-year boom in PC demand is starting to cool. The onset of the pandemic in 2020 led to a surge in remote working and learning, which in turn fueled demand for computers. That trend lasted through the January to March quarter, but Russia's invasion of Ukraine has disrupted supply chains and thrown PC makers' planning for the coming quarters into disarray.

4:00 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has recalled his country's ambassadors to Georgia and Morocco,

suggesting they haven't done enough to persuade those countries to support Ukraine and punish Russia for the invasion. "With all due respect, if there won't be weapons, won't be sanctions, won't be restrictions for Russian business, then please look for other work," Zelenskyy said in a nighttime video address to the nation.

11:57 a.m. The Biden administration is considering releasing up to 180 million barrels of oil over several months from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, Reuters reports, citing U.S. sources. That comes as the White House tries to cool fuel prices driven up by the war in Ukraine. The move would mark the third time the U.S. has tapped its strategic reserves in the past six months and would be the largest release in the nearly 50-year history of the SPR.

A Woman Looks for Personal Items in the Rubble of her House, Destroyed During Fighting Between Russian and Ukrainian Forces in a Village on the Outskirts of Kyiv on March 30. © AP

10:00 a.m. Russian forces bombarded areas around Kyiv and another city just hours after pledging to scale back

operations in those zones to promote trust between the two sides, Ukrainian authorities say. The shelling -- and intensified Russian attacks on other parts of the country -- tempered optimism about any progress in talks aimed at ending the punishing war.

6:30 a.m. The U.S. believes Russia has started to reposition less than 20% of its forces that had been arrayed against Ukraine's capital, but they are not expected to return home, Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby says.

Washington's assessment of the situation near Kyiv suggests the troop movements may not lead to a Russian de-escalation despite Moscow's claim that it was scaling back its military operations around the capital.

Meanwhile, Washington says there are indications Vladimir Putin may be receiving inaccurate information from commanders.

"We have information that Putin felt misled by the Russian military, which has resulted in persistent tension between Putin and his military leadership," White House communications director Kate Bedingfield tells reporters in a briefing.

4:31 a.m. Russia's invasion of Ukraine risks sending wheat prices to fresh highs this summer, inflicting economic pain from food-insecure developing countries to rich nations.

Ukraine and Russia together account for around 30% of global wheat exports. They play an especially large role during summer and fall, the harvest season for the Northern Hemisphere. With everything from spring planting to

logistics being hit by the war and Western sanctions, the situation could come to a head this summer. Read more.

2:00 a.m. With Russia now more than a month into its invasion of Ukraine and showing little sign of backing down, how has Russian President Vladimir Putin's mindset changed over the course of the conflict? The answer may lie in his voice.

An analysis of the audio suggests his stress levels were elevated starting in the days before the invasion and climbed sharply in early March, when Moscow responded to the tightening sanctions net around the country. Read more.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Is Seen Speaking on the Phone in This Photo Taken in February. © Reuters

1:45 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tweets that he discussed specific defensive support with U.S. President Joe Biden in an hourlong call Wednesday. The two leaders also discussed a new package of enhanced sanctions

against Russia, Zelenskyy says, as well as financial and humanitarian aid support for Ukraine.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1509202046574022656

1:39 a.m. The president of the Georgian breakaway region of South Ossetia says the territory will take steps soon to become part of Russia. Moscow recognized the territory and the coastal region of Abkhazia as independent after fighting a war with Georgia in 2008, extending financial support to the area as well as offering Russian citizenship and stationing troops there.

1:32 a.m. The offices of Russian gas major Gazprom are raided by European Union antitrust officials, sources tell Reuters, as the watchdog intensifies an investigation into the company's gas supplies to Europe.

The investigation began in January when EU antitrust chief Margrethe Vestager asked gas companies including Gazprom about tight supplies after accusations it was withholding extra production that could be released to lower rising prices.

The raid comes amid the backdrop of tightening sanctions against Russian gas and other energy exports over the invasion.

12:50 a.m. Russia is suffering from brain drain as a result of Western sanctions, the head of the Russian Academy of Sciences says.

"It's hard to estimate the scope of the losses, but I think they are high," Alexander Sergeyev, the physicist who serves as

the academy's president, is quoted by Interfax as saying. "It's necessary to offer benefits and increase the financing of science so that, apart from prestige, there should also be a proper material basis for it.”

Friday, April 1

11:00 p.m. Friday's European Union-China summit, the first since Russia invaded Ukraine, was "not business as usual" and took place in a "very sober atmosphere," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen says.

"We also made very clear that China should, if not support, at least not interfere, with our sanctions," von der Leyen tells a news conference.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, for his part, says China and the EU should work together to provide "stabilizing factors" in a turbulent world. "Xi pointed out that the Ukraine crisis has come on top of a protracted COVID-19 pandemic and a faltering global recovery," Xinhua reports.

Xi urges the EU to "to form its own perception of China" and "adopt an independent China policy," in an what appears to be a vield criticism of alignment with the U.S. Read more.

9:20 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov tells his Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar that his country was grateful for New Delhi's neutral stance on the Ukraine crisis amid Western efforts to isolate Moscow over the invasion.

"We appreciate that India is taking this situation in the entirety of facts, not just in a one-sided way," Lavrov said during a two-day visit to the Indian capital. Read more

9:02 p.m. Some Russian troops remain in the "exclusion zone" around the Chernobyl nuclear power station as of Friday morning local time, a day after ending their occupation of the defunct plant itself, a Ukrainian official says.

8:57 p.m. Gazprom will exit its business in Germany, the Russian energy giant says, amid a row between the two countries over Moscow's insistence on switching payments for Russian gas to rubles from euros. It was unclear how the move would affect the supply of Russian gas, on which Germany depends for about 40% of its needs.

German business daily Handelsblatt has reported that the German economy ministry was considering expropriating the Gazprom and Rosneft units in the country amid concerns about the security of energy supplies.

12:42 p.m. Japan "does not intend to withdraw" from oil and liquefied natural gas development projects in Russia, trade minister Koichi Hagiuda told reporters on Friday, as it makes a choice between energy security and further tightening sanctions on Russia for the war in Ukraine. Japanese trading and other companies have invested in the Sakhalin-1, Sakhalin-2 and Arctic LNG 2 (ARC 2) projects. Each has been deemed essential to Japan's energy security.

Ukrainian Servicemen Ride on an Armored Transporter Outside Kyiv on March 31. © AP

12:08 p.m. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison says his country will be sending armored Bushmaster vehicles to Ukraine to help in its war against Russia. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy specifically asked for the Australian-manufactured four-wheel-drive vehicles during a video appeal to Australian lawmakers for more aid on Thursday. Morrison told reporters the vehicles will be flown over on Boeing C-17 Globemaster transport planes, but he didn't specify how many Bushmaster vehicles would be sent or when.

7:16 a.m. Russia is redeploying elements of its forces from Georgia to reinforce its invasion of Ukraine, British military intelligence says. "Between 1,200 and 2,000 of these Russian troops are being reorganized into 3x Battalion Tactical Groups," Britain's Ministry of Defence says.

5:02 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin is demanding that foreign buyers pay for Russian gas in rubles starting today or have their supplies cut, a move European capitals rejected and which Germany said amounts to "blackmail." Putin's decree leaves Europe facing the prospect of losing more than a third of its gas supply. Putin said buyers of Russian gas "must open ruble accounts in Russian banks. It is from these accounts that payments will be made for gas delivered starting" April 1. Energy exports are Putin's most powerful lever as he tries to hit back against sweeping Western sanctions.

3:44 a.m. The International Atomic Energy Agency says it is preparing to send an "assistance and support mission" to the radioactive waste facilities at the defunct Chernobyl nuclear power station, following "consultations with Ukrainian authorities."

The U.N. watchdog's plan comes after Ukraine's state nuclear company Energoatom says most of the Russian forces that occupied the Chernobyl station during Moscow's invasion have left, and only a "small number" remain.

12:35 a.m. President Joe Biden will announce the largest-ever release of U.S. strategic oil reserves, putting an average of 1 million additional barrels on the market daily for the next six months to combat higher fuel prices faced by Americans, the White House says.

Biden also will authorize use of the Defense Production Act to support the production and processing of minerals and materials used for large capacity batteries, such as lithium, nickel, cobalt, graphite and manganese, the White House says, part of a push to accelerate the country's transition to cleaner, domestic energy sources.

Saturday, April 2

8:34 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Kazakh leader Kassym-Jomart Tokayev agree during a phone call that it is vital for an agreement to be reached for a neutral, nonaligned and nuclear-free Ukraine, Reuters reports.

A readout of the call, released by Kazakhstan's presidential office, says Putin had briefed Tokayev on the progress of negotiations between Ukraine and Russia.

7:27 p.m. Pope Francis comes the closest he has yet to implicitly criticizing Vladimir Putin over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, saying a "potentate" was fomenting conflicts for nationalist interests, according to Reuters.

"From the east of Europe, from the land of the sunrise, the dark shadows of war have now spread. We had thought that invasions of other countries, savage street fighting and atomic threats were grim memories of a distant past," the pope says in an address to Maltese officials after arriving on the Mediterranean island nation for a two-day visit.

"However, the icy winds of war, which bring only death, destruction and hatred in their wake, have swept down powerfully upon the lives of many people and affected us all."

3:00 p.m. Ukrainian troops continue to advance against withdrawing Russian forces in the vicinity of Kyiv, British military intelligence says. Russian forces are also reported to have withdrawn from Hostomel airport, near the capital, which has been subject to fighting since the first day of the conflict, Britain's Ministry of Defence said in a regular bulletin. "In the east of Ukraine, Ukrainian forces have

secured a key route in eastern Kharkiv after heavy fighting," the ministry added.

10:32 a.m. A Red Cross convoy traveling to Mariupol will make another attempt to evacuate civilians from the besieged port on Saturday as Russian forces looked to be regrouping for new attacks in the southeast. A team from the International Committee of the Red Cross had tried to move into the city on Friday but had to turn back. "They will try again on Saturday to facilitate the safe passage of civilians," the ICRC said in a statement.

The Bykovets Family Members -- Olga, 42; Ilya, 13; and Yegor, 5 -- Gather in a Courtyard in Mariupol. The Red Cross Is Making a Second Attempt in as Many Days To Move Into the Southern Port City To Bring Civilians Out. © Reuters

9:14 a.m. The U.S. Department of Defense will provide Ukraine with an additional $300 million worth of laser-guided rocket systems, drones, commercial satellite imagery services and other security assistance. "This announcement represents the beginning of a contracting process to provide

new capabilities to Ukraine's Armed Forces," Defense Department spokesman John Kirby said in a statement.
3:00 a.m. A total of 6,266 people were evacuated from Ukrainian cities through humanitarian corridors on Friday, a senior Ukrainian official says, with 3,071 people leaving the besieged city of Mariupol.

2:05 a.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on his latest call with U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/SecBlinken/status/1509937555843788806

1:46 a.m. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has repeated his offer to Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin that Turkey is ready to host a summit between Russia and Ukraine for debate on difficult issues such as Crimea and the Donbas region of Ukraine.

"Erdogan said it is important for sides to act with common sense and keep the dialogue," the Turkish side says after his phone call with Putin.

A statement released by the Russian side says that Putin thanked Turkey for its assistance in hosting another round of Russia-Ukraine talks. Neither statement showed any signs of Putin warming up to the idea of a summit with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. In a tweet, Zelenskyy calls Erdogan a "real friend" of Ukraine.

Sunday, April 3

11:26 p.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken tells CNN the images of dead Ukrainian civilians found in Bucha after Russian troops left are a "punch in the gut" and that those responsible for any war crimes must be held accountable. Ukrainian forces had moved into the town near Kyiv and found what officials and witnesses say were the bodies of nearly 300 civilians killed by Russian troops.

Blinken would not confirm reports that the U.S. is facilitating the transfers of Soviet-era tanks to Ukrainian forces from eastern European allies, but says that there "are or will soon be in Ukraine more than 10 anti-tank systems for every Russian tank."

9:44 p.m. Bucha Mayor Anatoliy Fedoruk shows journalists dead bodies in an area he says Chechen fighters controlled during the month that Russian forces occupied the Ukrainian city on the northern outskirts of Kyiv. One corpse appeared to have his hands bound by white cloth, and to have been shot in the mouth.

"The Russians have demonstrated that they were consciously killing civilians," Fedoruk alleges.

Reuters, which was taken to the scene by Ukrainian authorities, was not immediately able to verify the mayor's allegations. Russia's Defense Ministry did not immediately reply to a request for comment. Chechnya is a region in southern Russia that has deployed troops to Ukraine to support Russian forces.

8:10 p.m. A leading rights group says it documented "apparent war crimes" committed by Russian military forces

against civilians in Ukraine. Human Rights Watch says it found "several cases of Russian military forces committing laws-of-war violations" in Russian-controlled regions such as Chernihiv, Kharkiv and Kyiv.

The statement, published in Warsaw, comes one day after dead civilians were found lying scattered through the streets of Bucha, three days after the Russian army pulled back after a monthlong occupation of the area 30 km northwest of Kyiv.

7:16 p.m. Ukrainian grain exports in March were four times less than February levels, due to the Russian invasion, the economy ministry says. March grain shipments overseas included 1.1 million tons of corn, 309,000 tons of wheat and 118,000 tons of sun oil. Ukraine was the world's fourth-largest grain exporter in the 2020-21 season, according to International Grains Council data, with most of its commodities shipped out via the Black Sea.

7:00 p.m. Allegations of attacks against civilians during Russia's invasion of Ukraine must be investigated as war crimes, British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss says, adding that the U.K. will fully support any such move by the International Criminal Court.

"As Russian troops are forced into retreat, we are seeing increasing evidence of appalling acts by the invading forces in towns such as Irpin and Bucha," Truss says in a statement, referring to places near Kyiv. "Their indiscriminate attacks against innocent civilians during Russia's illegal and unjustified invasion of Ukraine must be investigated as war crimes."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Attends a Meeting With Government Members and Top Officials for Economics Issues. © Kyodo

4:15 p.m. Work on evacuating people with the help of Red Cross from Mariupol will continue on Sunday with buses attempting to come close to the besieged city, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says.

"Seven buses will try to get closer to Mariupol, accompanied by the International Committee of the Red Cross," Vereshchuk says in an online video. There will be 17 buses prepared to evacuate people from Mariupol and Berdyansk, she says.

3:10 p.m. Russia says that peace talks had not progressed enough for a leaders' meeting and that Moscow's position on the status of Crimea and Donbas remained unchanged. "The draft agreement is not ready for submission to a meeting at the top," Russian chief negotiator Vladimir Medinsky says on Telegram. "I repeat again and again: Russia's position on Crimea and Donbas remains UNCHANGED."

2:15 p.m. Russian naval forces continue to blockade the Ukrainian coast on the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, preventing resupply by sea, British military intelligence says. Russia retains the capability to attempt an amphibious landing, but such an operation is likely to be increasingly high risk due to the time Ukrainian forces have had to prepare, the Ministry of Defense tweets in a regular bulletin.

1:00 p.m. Missiles struck Ukraine's southern port city of Odessa in the early hours of Sunday, the city council says in an online post. One of the city's "critical infrastructure facilities" was hit, regional administration spokesperson Sergey Bratchuk tells Ukraine's public broadcaster.

6:29 a.m. Russian forces want to seize east and south Ukraine, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says in a late night address, adding Western nations had not provided enough anti-missile systems in their aid. Ukraine's president also heaps praise on his forces defending Mariupol, saying the fierce resistance in the besieged port city was giving the country's other cities valuable time.

4:27 a.m. Ukrainian military reports Russia is sending soldiers to Moldova's breakaway region of Transnistria, where they were preparing to launch "provocations" along the border, near Odessa, the Financial Times reports.

Russian troops already in Transnistria were preparing for "a demonstration of readiness for the offensive and, possibly, hostilities against Ukraine," says the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Moldova's Foreign Ministry says it is unaware of a troop buildup while officials in Transnistria deny the reports as "completely untrue."

3:35 a.m. Ukraine says it has seized back all areas around Kyiv, claiming complete control of the capital region for the first time since the invasion. As Russia's forces regrouped for battles in the east, areas north of Kyiv were littered with destroyed Russian tanks. Ukraine presidential adviser Okeksiy Arestovych says its troops have retaken more than 30 towns and villages since Russia pulled back from the area this week, Reuters reports.

Ukrainian Soldiers in Bucha, a City in Ukraine's Kyiv Oblast, Which Has Been Cleared of Russian Forces for Now. © Reuters

Monday, April 4

8:28 p.m. France faces a repeat of the 2017 presidential election showdown between Emmanuel Macron and far-right candidate Marine Le Pen, with Macron still favored but in a much tighter race as his lead narrows, opinion polls show ahead of the first round of voting on Sunday.

Five years ago, Macron beat Le Pen with 66.1% of the vote in the runoff, with voters of all stripes rallying behind the centrist. But the latest poll forecasts just a 53%-47% margin of victory for President Macron. Le Pen has improved her standing with a campaign focused on the declining purchasing power of middle- and lower-income voters.

5:00 p.m. Russia's chief investigator orders an official investigation into what he calls a "provocation" from Ukraine after Kyiv accused the Russian military of massacring civilians in the town of Bucha. Alexander Bastrykin, head of the Russian Investigative Committee, has ordered that the investigation on the basis that Ukraine had spread "deliberately false information" about Russian armed forces in Bucha, according to the committee.

3:52 p.m. French President Emmanuel Macron says more sanctions on Russia are needed after Ukraine accused Russian forces of killing civilians in the town of Bucha. Macron told France Inter radio that there were "very clear clues" indicating that Russian forces were responsible for war crimes in Ukraine. Russia on Sunday denied its forces were responsible for the deaths of civilians in the town and said Ukraine had staged a performance for Western media.

12:05 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy made a surprise video appearance at the music industry's

star-studded Grammy Awards celebration in Las Vegas and appealed to viewers to support his country "in any way you can." "What is more opposite to music? The silence of ruined cities and killed people," said Zelenskyy in the video. "Fill the silence with your music. Fill it today, to tell our story. Support us in any way you can. Any, but not silence." He added, "Our musicians wear body armor instead of tuxedos, they sing to the wounded, in hospitals, even to those who can't hear them, but the music will break through."

10:10 a.m. Oil prices extend losses Monday as investors eye the release of supplies from strategic reserves from consuming nations, while a truce in Yemen could ease supply disruption concerns in the Middle East. Brent crude futures fell 79 cents, or 0.8%, to $103.60 a barrel by 0037 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude was at $98.45 a barrel, down 82 cents, or 0.8%. Both contracts slipped $1 when markets opened Monday. The United Nations has brokered a two-month truce between a Saudi-led coalition and the Houthi group aligned with Iran for the first time in the seven-year conflict. Saudi oil facilities have come under attack by the Houthis during the conflict, adding to supply disruption from Russia.

8:00 a.m. Hungary's nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban scored a fourth consecutive landslide win in Sunday's election, as voters endorsed his ambition for a conservative, "illiberal" state and shrugged off concerns over Budapest's close ties with Moscow. Russia's invasion of Ukraine had appeared to upend Orban's campaign, forcing him into awkward maneuvering to explain decade-old cozy business relations with President Vladimir Putin. But he mounted a successful campaign to persuade his Fidesz party's core electorate that the six-party opposition alliance of Peter Marki-Zay promising to mend ties with the European Union

could lead the country into war, an accusation the opposition denied.

5:50 a.m. Pope Francis pays tribute to journalists killed during the Ukraine war, saying he hoped God would reward them for serving the common good whatever side they were on. At least six journalists have died since Russian forces invaded Ukraine in late February.

Speaking with journalists aboard the papal plane returning from Malta, Francis reiterates that he is ready to visit Kyiv but adds that he has yet to decide whether it is feasible.

A Man Stands Next to a Grave in Bucha, Ukraine, on April 3. © Reuters

12:28 a.m. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba accuses Russian forces of carrying out a "massacre" in the town of Bucha as images of corpses in civilian clothes left behind by departing Russian troops prompt calls from

officials in Ukraine and Europe for tougher sanctions on Russia.

Russia's Defense Ministry denies the allegations, calling footage and photographs showing dead bodies in the town near Ukraine's capital "another staged performance by the Kyiv regime for the Western media.”

Tuesday, April 5

11:13 p.m. The Czech Republic has sent T-72 tanks and BVP-1 infantry fighting vehicles to Ukraine, a Czech defense source tells Reuters. Public broadcaster Czech Television had shown footage on Twitter of a train loaded with five tanks and five fighting vehicles, saying the shipment was a gift agreed upon with NATO allies.

10:00 p.m. The 30 NATO allies would welcome Finland and Sweden into the alliance if they decided to join, but any such move is up to the two nations, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says.

NATO likely would find ways "to address the concerns they may have about this interim period between having applied and until the last ratification [by allies] has taken place," he says, referring to possible Russian retaliation before the pair were fully under NATO protection.

5:52 p.m. Italy has expelled 30 Russian diplomats because of security concerns, according to Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio. Denmark says it will expel 15 Russian diplomats, in line with steps taken by other European Union countries, after reports of mass graves of civilians being found in Bucha. "This is another example of brutality, cruelty and war crimes, which apparently have taken place in Bucha," Danish Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod told a press briefing.

5:30 p.m. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says Ukraine has no option but to negotiate with Russia to end the fighting but that he and Russian President Vladimir Putin may not personally hold talks. "All of us, including myself, will perceive even the possibility of negotiations as a

challenge," Zelenskyy says in an interview with Ukrainian journalists broadcast on national television.

2:50 p.m. Ukrainian forces have retaken key northern terrain, forcing Russian forces to retreat from areas around the city of Chernihiv and north of the capital, Kyiv, British military intelligence says. Low-level fighting is likely to continue in some of the recaptured areas but reduce this week as the remainder of the Russian forces withdraw, the defense ministry said in a regular bulletin on Twitter. Many of the withdrawing Russian units are likely to require significant reequipping and refurbishment before they redeploy for operations in the country's east, the ministry added.

12:10 p.m. The U.S. has stopped the Russian government from paying holders of its sovereign debt totaling more than $600 million from reserves held at American banks. Under sanctions put in place after Russia invaded Ukraine, foreign currency reserves held by the Russian central bank at U.S. financial institutions were frozen. But the Treasury Department had been allowing Moscow to use those funds to make coupon payments on dollar-denominated sovereign debt on a case-by-case basis.

11:54 a.m. Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi returns home from Poland, bringing 20 evacuees from Ukraine in a show of Tokyo's latest support for the war-torn nation and neighboring countries. The 20 people who boarded a Japanese government plane in Warsaw had hoped to travel to Japan but had been unable to secure their own transportation, according to Hayashi.

9:56 a.m. Russia will respond proportionately to the expulsion of its diplomats from a number of Western

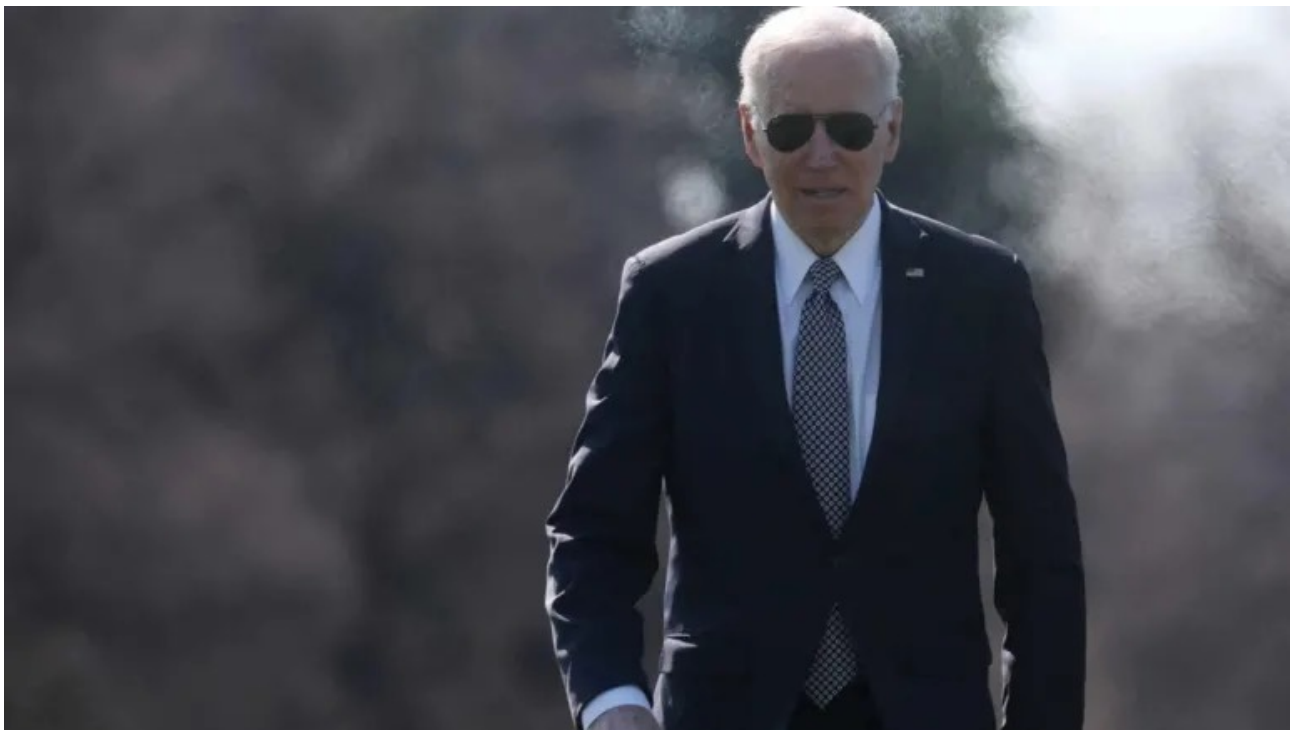
countries, says Dmitry Medvedev, former Russian president and current deputy secretary of the country's Security Council. "Everyone knows the answer: It will be symmetrical and destructive for bilateral relations," he said on his Telegram channel. "Who have they punished? First of all, themselves."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy With Ukrainian Military in Bucha, Outside Kyiv, on April 4. © Reuters

8:42 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says he will address the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday and predicted that further and worse instances of mass killings of civilians by Russian troops would be discovered. Tuesday's Security Council session is to consider Ukrainian allegations of the murder of civilians by Russian soldiers in Bucha, northwest of Kyiv, following the discovery of hundreds of bodies, some bound and shot at close range.

4:33 a.m. A team from the International Committee of the Red Cross is detained by police during an attempt to reach the Ukrainian city of Mariupol to evacuate civilians and is

being held nearby in Manhush, a spokesperson tells Reuters. "It's not a hostage situation," the spokesperson says. Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says the Red Cross team is being held by "the occupation authorities."



U.S. President Joe Biden Walks Toward Reporters After Arriving at Fort Mcnair Army Base in Washington on April 4. © Reuters

4:30 a.m. The Biden administration will announce additional sanctions on Russia this week, U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan tells a news conference. Meanwhile, the United Nations Security Council will hold an emergency meeting on Tuesday to discuss "mounting evidence of war crimes, including from Bucha," U.K. Ambassador Barbara Woodward says

4:00 a.m. Japan is not included in Russia's latest retaliation against international sanctions: restricting visa issuance. President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree suspending simplified visa issuance for countries Moscow

has deemed "unfriendly" over their response to its invasion of Ukraine.

While Japan is one of these "unfriendly" nations, it is not among the countries selected for visa restrictions. Those targets are European Union members and non-EU countries in Europe such as Norway and Switzerland.

2:30 a.m. France and Germany will expel Russian diplomats in response to the alleged killings of civilians in Bucha.

Germany will declare about 40 Russian diplomats as personae non gratae, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock says. Germany media say these diplomats will have to leave the country within five days of such a declaration.

Moscow says it will respond to Paris' decision, RIA Novosti reports.

2:05 a.m. The U.S. will work with its partners to try to suspend Russia's membership on the United Nations Human Rights Council, says Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. representative to the U.N.

The ambassador is part of an international chorus of voices denouncing Russia after new allegations of war crimes in Ukraine. Moscow denies that its forces were responsible for civilian deaths in Bucha.

U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss expresses her support for locking Russia out of the Human Rights Council.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/trussliz/status/1510991144179671047

12:35 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden labels Russian President Vladimir Putin a war criminal and calls for a war crimes trial as the global outcry mounts over civilian killings in the Ukrainian town of Bucha.

"You saw what happened in Bucha," Biden tells reporters at the White House, referring to the discovery of a mass grave and tied bodies shot at close range. "This warrants him -- he is a war criminal." The Kremlin denies any accusations related to the murder of civilians, including in Bucha.

12:30 a.m. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says it will be more difficult for Ukraine to negotiate with Russia after the scale of atrocities carried out by Russian troops in occupied territories has become known. The Ukrainian leader speaks on national television from the town of Bucha in the Kyiv region, where tied bodies shot at close range, a mass grave and other signs of executions have been found in territory retaken from Russian troops.

Moscow has denied any accusations related to the killing of civilians in Bucha.

Wednesday, April 6

8:00 p.m. Mere months ago Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was on the ropes. The lira had crashed and his unorthodox monetary policy was being ridiculed in financial markets.

But the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and its subsequent struggles on the battlefield, have led to a dramatic diplomatic turnaround for Turkey, which finds itself at the center of efforts to establish a cease-fire.

It stands in contrast to China and India, who have been criticized by the global community for sitting on the fence. Read more.

6:00 p.m. Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar says in parliament that New Delhi is "deeply disturbed" by the reports of civilians killed in Bucha. "We strongly condemned the killings which have taken place there. This is an extremely serious matter, and we support the call for an independent investigation," he adds.

India, which has extensive defense dealings with Russia, has been reluctant to speak out against the invasion.

"If India has chosen a side, it is the side of peace and it is for an immediate end to violence," Jaishankar says.

Pope Francis holds up the Ukrainian flag that was sent to him from Bucha. © Reuters

5:37 p.m. Pope Francis condemns the "massacre of Bucha," while holding up a Ukrainian flag sent to him from the town where hundreds of civilians were executed and mass graves have been found.

"Recent news from the war in Ukraine, instead of bringing relief and hope, brought new atrocities, such as the massacre of Bucha," he said during his weekly address. "Cruelty that is increasingly horrendous, even against civilians, defenseless women and children. They are victims whose innocent blood cries out up to heaven and implores: 'Stop this war! Let the weapons fall silent! Stop sowing death and destruction.'"

The Kremlin said on Tuesday allegations that Russian forces committed war crimes by executing civilians in Bucha were a "monstrous forgery" aimed at denigrating its army.

11:18 a.m. U.S. chipmaker Intel says it has suspended operations in Russia, joining a slew of companies exiting the country following its invasion of Ukraine. The company, which last month suspended shipments to customers in Russia and Belarus, said it has implemented business continuity measures to minimize disruption to its global operations.

IBM, too, has suspended shipments, as Ukraine urged U.S. cloud-computing and software companies to cut off business with Russia. Servers from IBM, Dell Technologies and Hewlett Packard top the market in Russia, where companies and government agencies have relied on technology developed by the West as the basis for their IT systems.

4:20 a.m. The U.S. and its Group of Seven and European Union allies on Wednesday will impose new sanctions against Russian banks and government officials and ban investment in Russia, a source familiar with the announcement tells Reuters.

The measures will "degrade key instruments of Russian state power, impose acute and immediate economic harm on Russia and hold accountable the Russian kleptocracy that funds and supports (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's war," the source says.

3:00 a.m. NATO foreign ministers will meet with their counterparts from the Asia-Pacific this week, seeking to gain their cooperation in deepening the economic and diplomatic isolation of Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

Top diplomats from eight countries and the European Union will take part, including Ukraine as well as Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. In light of reports of alleged war crimes by Russia in Ukraine, the ministers are expected to discuss their responses, including additional assistance to Kyiv.

"Targeting and murdering civilians is a war crime," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg tells reporters on Tuesday. Read more.

2:45 a.m. Asked whether the U.S. was providing military training to Ukrainians outside of Ukraine, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin says: "To use some of the gear, certainly they have to have training, and we're doing that."

Austin's comments come at a House Armed Services Committee hearing with Joint Chiefs of Staff Chair Gen. Mark Milley.

2:30 a.m. The United Nations has failed to function in the face of the worst war crimes since World War II, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has told the U.N. Security Council.

Russia has used its Security Council veto as a license to kill, Zelenskyy says. Tuesday's emergency meeting was called to discuss Ukrainian allegations that Russian troops killed unarmed civilians in Bucha. Read more.

Thursday, April 7

11:55 p.m. The U.S. Senate overwhelmingly backs legislation to remove "most favored nation" trade status for Russia and its close ally Belarus over the invasion of Ukraine, allowing for higher tariffs on imports from the two countries. As voting continues, the tally in the 100-member Senate was 65-0 in favor of removing Permanent Normal Trade Relations status.

Senate approval will send the measure to the House of Representatives, where passage is expected later on Thursday, sending the legislation to the White House for President Joe Biden to sign into law.

6:30 p.m. Russia's communications watchdog said on Thursday it was taking punitive measures against Google, including a ban on advertising the platform and its information resources, for violating Russian law. Roskomnadzor accused Google's YouTube video-sharing platform, which has shut out Russian state-funded media globally, of becoming "one of the key platforms spreading fakes (fake images) about the course of (Russia's) special military operation on the territory of Ukraine, discrediting the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation."

3:40 p.m. Shell will write down up to $5 billion following its decision to exit Russia, higher than previously disclosed, while soaring oil and gas prices boosted trading activities in the first quarter, the company says. The post-tax impairments of between $4 billion and $5 billion in the first quarter will not impact the company's earnings, Shell said in an update ahead of its earnings announcement on May 5. It had previously said the Russia write-downs would reach around $3.4 billion.

A Woman Carries her Cat Past Buildings Destroyed by Russian Shelling Near Kyiv on April 5. © Reuters

1:30 p.m. The U.N. General Assembly will vote on Thursday on a U.S. push to suspend Russia from its Human Rights Council over reports of "gross and systematic violations and abuses of human rights" by Russian troops in Ukraine. A two-thirds majority of voting members -- abstentions do not count -- can suspend a country from the 47-member council. Western diplomats are confident they have enough support among the 193-member General Assembly to adopt a resolution to suspend Moscow.

10:30 a.m. International Energy Agency states have agreed to tap 60 million barrels of oil from storage, the director of the group says, on top of a 180-million-barrel release announced by Washington last week aimed at cooling prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The move by the U.S.-allied IEA countries, which represent 31 mostly industrialized countries but not Russia, would be their second coordinated release in a month and would be the fifth in the agency's history to confront oil market outages.

10:18 a.m. U.S. sanctions against two of Russia's largest banks are "a direct blow to the Russian population [and] ordinary citizens," the Tass news agency cites Russia's U.S. ambassador as saying on Wednesday. Anatoly Antonov made his remarks after Washington hit Sberbank, which holds a third of Russia's total banking assets, and Alfabank, the fourth-largest financial institution.

5:30 a.m. U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss tweets about her meeting with NATO Quint counterparts.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/trussliz/status/1511797138270867461

5:00 a.m. The U.S. believes Russian forces have completely withdrawn from the area around Kyiv, a senior American official says.

The troops were pulling back to Belarus and Russia to regroup, the official says. They may join the fighting in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbas, which Russia has designated the new focus of its "special military operation" -- what Moscow calls its invasion.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, also says a small number of Ukrainians are receiving training in the U.S. to use tank-killing Switchblade drones. These Ukrainians are supposed to return to their country soon, the official says.

A Tank-Killing Switchblade 600 Drone, an Extended-Range Loitering Missile System. (AeroVironment via AP)

4:00 a.m. Chinese President Xi Jinping's personal alliance with Russian President Vladimir Putin is hampering China's diplomacy. That is becoming clearer as the war in Ukraine rages on.

Both men have laid the groundwork to stay in power until the middle of the 2030s. Both have territorial ambitions: reestablishing the former Soviet Union's sphere of influence for Putin, Taiwan for Xi. But the association comes with significant risk. Read more in this week's China Up Close.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen Says He Has Made the Biden Administration's Position Clear to This Year's G-20 President, Indonesia. © Reuters

2:30 a.m. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen says she has told this year's Group of 20 president Indonesia that the American side "we will not be participating in a number of meetings if the Russians are there."

U.S. President Joe Biden has called for Russia to be removed from the G-20 over its invasion of Ukraine.

2:00 a.m. One world leader willing to accept Russia's demand to pay for natural gas in rubles is Hungary's Victor Orban.

The Hungarian prime minister, whose right-wing ruling party won by a landslide in a parliamentary election Sunday, tells a news conference he has called on Vladimir Putin to end the war in Ukraine immediately and says he is reconsidering his country's close ties with Moscow. Yet Orban says "if the Russians request it, we will pay in rubles," the Financial Times reports.

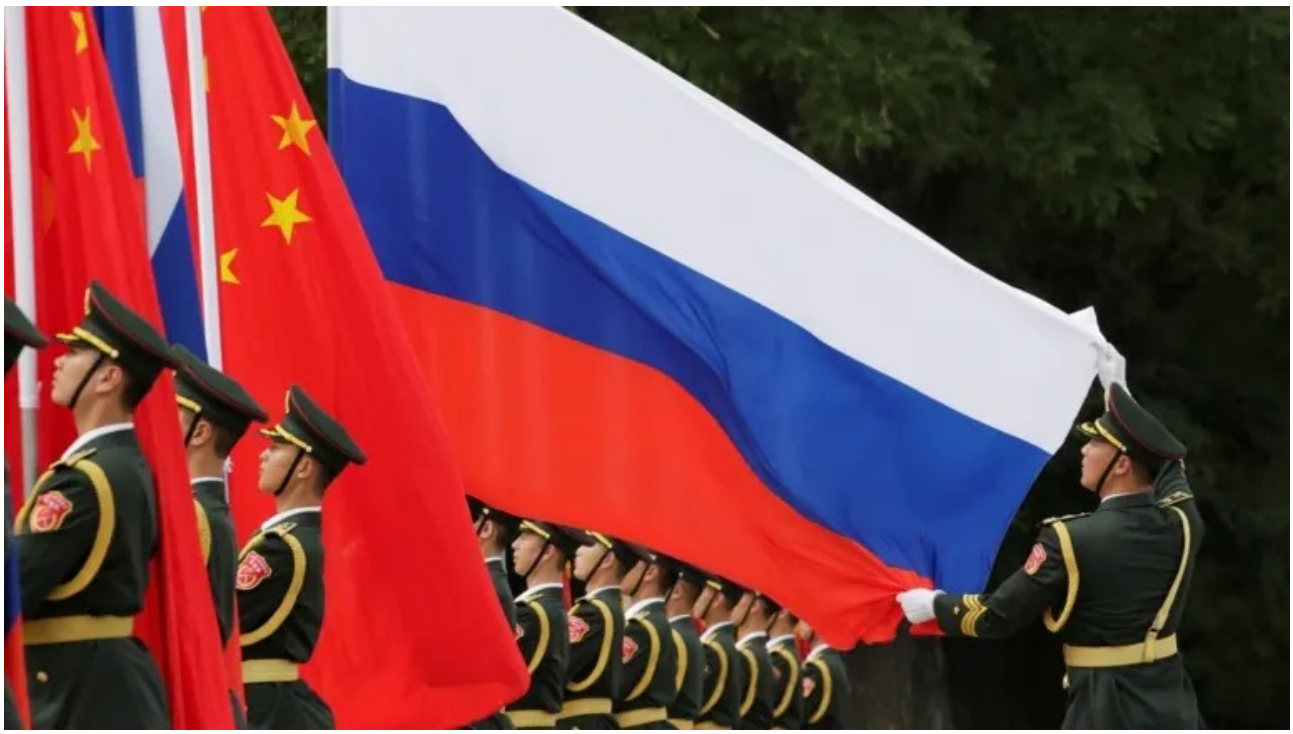
Germany and other countries have rejected Putin's demand for payment in rubles, which Russia has yet to enforce.

2:10 a.m. New U.S. sanctions on Russia add the country's top bank, Sberbank, to the list of targets, as well as family members of Russia President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. These and other international responses to Russia's invasion of Ukraine are not lost on China, Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman says.

"The strong and coordinated response from the international community, including nations in the Indo-Pacific, to Russia's flagrant violations on international law and principles like sovereignty and territorial integrity sends a strong signal that such actions will not go ignored," Sherman tells the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The range of sanctions and "unprecedented" coordination between the U.S. and its partners give Chinese President Xi Jinping a "good understanding of what might come his way should he in fact support Putin in any material fashion," Sherman says.

On support for U.S. partners, Republican Congressman Michael McCaul of Texas says: "Putin's invasion of Russia shows us how critical it is to give our allies the weapons they need before an invasion and not after." McCaul is preparing to introduce a bill that would create "a security assistance program for Taiwan."



A Chinese Military Officer Adjusts a Russian Flag Ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's 2018 Visit to Beijing. © Reuters

Friday, April 8

10:30 p.m. The ruble rallied after Russia's central bank cut its main interest rate in a surprise move. The cut, which follows new sanctions on Russia including a U.S. ban on crude oil imports, partly reverses an emergency rate hike in late February after the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"Today's decision reflects a change in the balance of risks of accelerated consumer price growth, decline in economic activity and financial stability risks," the Central Bank of Russia says in a statement reported by Interfax.

8:50 p.m. Russian citizens are spending on average 40% of their disposable income on food, about double the amount from before Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, the director of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's Russia liaison office tells Reuters. Russian government data shows annual food inflation hit 18.75% on April 1 as the economy reels from Western sanctions. The average European Union household spends about 12% of its income on food, the director says.

Meanwhile, global food prices have hit record levels in the wake of the Ukraine war, the latest FAO data shows.

6:00 p.m. More than 30 people were killed and over 100 were wounded in a Russian rocket strike on a railway station in eastern Ukraine on Friday as civilians tried to evacuate to safer parts of the country, the state railway company says. It said two Russian rockets struck a station in the city of Kramatorsk, which is used to evacuate civilians from areas under bombardment by Russian forces.

4:50 p.m. Japan's Foreign Ministry says it will expel a number of Russian diplomats stationed in the country in Tokyo's latest response to the civilian killings reported during the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Eight Russians, including diplomats, will be expelled, it announced Friday. Japan has been cautious about expelling Russian diplomats up to now, but changed course as the U.S. and European countries have moved to punish Russia diplomatically. Tokyo's decision is likely to prompt Moscow to make tit-for-tat expulsions of Japanese diplomats from Russia.

3:30 p.m. India's central bank cuts its economic growth forecast for the fiscal year that started April 1 to 7.2%, from the 7.8% projected in February, citing the Russia-Ukraine war.

"Although India's direct trade exposure to countries at the epicenter of the conflict is limited, the war could potentially impede the economic recovery through elevated commodity prices and global spillover channels," Reserve Bank of India Gov. Shaktikanta Das says.

There are several other factors at work, he adds. "Financial market volatility induced by monetary policy normalization in advanced economies, renewed COVID-19 infections in some major countries with augmented supply-side disruptions and protracted shortages of critical inputs, such as semiconductors and chips, pose downside risks to the outlook."

3:18 p.m. Ukraine says it aims to establish up to 10 humanitarian corridors to evacuate trapped civilians on Friday, but civilians trying to flee the besieged southern city of Mariupol will have to use private vehicles. The 10 planned safe corridors announced by Deputy Prime Minister Iryna

Vereshchuk were all in southern and eastern Ukraine. Ukrainian officials say Moscow plans to seize as much territory as it can in the eastern part of Ukraine known as Donbas bordering Russia.

11:00 a.m. The chairman of Russian aluminum giant Rusal calls for an impartial investigation into the killing of civilians in the Ukrainian town of Bucha, which he described as a crime, and urged an end to the "fratricidal" conflict. While the statement from Chairman Bernard Zonneveld, a Dutch national, did not touch on who was to blame for the deaths of civilians in the town, it is unusual for a large Russian company to comment publicly on the conflict. "We support an objective and impartial investigation of this crime and call for severe punishment for the perpetrators," he said.

Japan's Industry Minister, Koichi Hagiuda, Said on April 8 That the Country Would Seek To Phase Out Imports of Russian Coal To Punish Moscow for its Invasion of Ukraine. © Reuters

10:18 a.m. Japan will phase out Russian coal imports as part of its sanctions against Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine, Japan's industry minister says, joining other Group of Seven industrialized nations. Koichi Hagiuda told a regular news conference that Japan will gradually reduce the amount imported from Russia, and eventually break Japan's dependence on its coal, saying, "We seek to stop importing in the end." The move comes a day after G-7 foreign ministers vowed to "expedite" plans to end their energy dependence on Russia by phasing out and banning Russian coal imports to punish Moscow.

9:05 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says work has begun to dig through the rubble in Borodianka, a city northwest of Kyiv that was occupied by Russian military forces. He also said "it is much scarier" there, with even more victims of Russian troops. In his daily nighttime video address to the nation Thursday, Zelenskyy said the Russians were preparing to shock the world in the same way by showing corpses in Mariupol and falsely claiming they were killed by the Ukrainian defenders.

Ukrainian Soldiers Walk Next to Destroyed Russian Tanks and Armored Vehicles. © Reuters

4:30 a.m. Pink Floyd is releasing its first new music in almost three decades to raise money for the people of Ukraine, the band announces. "Hey Hey Rise Up" features Pink Floyd members David Gilmour and Nick Mason, with vocals from Ukrainian singer Andriy Khlyvnyuk of the band BoomBox. Roger Waters, who left the band in the 1980s, is not involved. The track features Khlyvnyuk singing a patriotic Ukrainian song from a clip he recorded in front of Kyiv's St. Sophia Cathedral and posted on social media.

2:51 a.m. Russia has sustained "significant" troop losses in Ukraine, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov tells British television channel Sky News.

"We have significant losses of troops, and ... it's a huge tragedy for us," he says when responding to interviewer Mark Austin's question: "You've lost thousands of troops. How many troops have you lost?"

Peskov expresses hope that the operation will achieve its goals, or end via negotiations, in the coming days but also calls verified imagery of dead civilians in Bucha a "bold fake."

Russia's Defense Ministry reported March 25 that 1,351 service members had been killed, and 3,825 wounded, since the start of the operation, state news agency Tass says in a brief story about the interview.

2:00 a.m. The United Nations suspends Russia from the Human Rights Council in a vote. Ninety-three member states voted for the resolution. Twenty-four voted against, including Russia and China. India was among the 58 member states that abstained. The Western-led draft resolution expressed "grave concern regarding reports of 'gross and systematic violations and abuses of human rights' and 'violations of international humanitarian law'" by Russia in the Ukraine war.

A Completed Resolution Vote Tally To Affirm the Suspension of Russia From the United Nations Human Rights Council Is Displayed During a Meeting of the U.N. General Assembly on Thursday. © AP

Saturday, April 9

11:40 p.m. The European Commission pledges 1 billion euros ($1.1 billion) to support Ukraine and countries receiving refugees fleeing the war following Russia's invasion, Reuters reports. "Six hundred million of those will go to Ukraine, to the Ukrainian authorities and partially to the United Nations," the president of the EU's executive branch, Ursula von der Leyen, says at a fundraising event for Ukraine in Warsaw, Poland. "And 400 million euros will go to the frontline states that are doing such an outstanding job and helping the refugees that are coming."

11:22 p.m. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson makes a surprise trip to Kyiv to meet Zelenskyy. "Right now a visit of Boris Johnson in Kyiv started from one-on-one meeting with President Zelenskyy," Andriy Sybiha, deputy head of Ukraine's president office, said on Facebook.

Officials in the U.K. confirm the meeting, saying the two are discussing long-term support for Ukraine as well as further financial and military aid. Johnson's trip is "in a show of solidarity with the Ukrainian people," a Downing Street spokesperson says.

"The U.K. will send more defensive weapons to Ukraine and will work with G-7 partners to target every pillar of the Russian economy to ensure Putin fails," Johnson tweeted earlier on Saturday.

Sunday, April 10

1:38 p.m. A new grave with dozens of civilian Ukrainians was found on Saturday in Buzova, a liberated village near the capital Kyiv that for weeks was occupied by Russian forces, a local official says. Taras Didych, head of the Dmytrivka community that includes Buzova and several other nearby villages, told Ukrainian television that the bodies were found in a ditch near a petrol station. The number of dead is yet to be confirmed. "Now, we are returning to life, but during the occupation we had our 'hotspots', many civilians died," Didych said.

10:41 a.m. Ukraine has banned all imports from Russia, one of its key trading partners before the war with annual imports valued at about $6 billion, and called on other countries to follow and impose harsher economic sanctions on Moscow. "Today we officially announced a complete termination of trade in goods with the aggressor state," Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko wrote on her Facebook page. "From now on, no Russian Federation's products will be able to be imported into the territory of our state."

6:11 a.m. The British Ministry of Defense says Russian forces are continuing to use improvised explosive devices to inflict casualties, lower morale and restrict Ukrainian freedom of movement, Reuters reports. "Russian forces also continue to attack infrastructure targets with a high risk of collateral harm to civilians," the ministry says in a statement, citing intelligence reports. Russia's departure from northern Ukraine leaves evidence of the disproportionate targeting of non-combatants, the statement adds.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson Meet in Kyiv on April 9. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service Handout via Reuters)

Twitter: https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1512695924723789828

11:10 p.m. Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala says the country should cut its dependence on Russian energy resources within five years, calling the current situation one of the Czech Republic's "greatest security risks." The EU member meets its gas needs almost entirely through shipments directly or indirectly from Russia, and gets roughly half its crude imports from the same source. Fiala adds the country's energy sector has to change "completely."

9:59 p.m. European Union countries sharing borders with Russia and Belarus bar some cargo vehicles registered in the two countries from entering due to sanctions, the Russian customs service says, according to Reuters. Vehicles used as international transport that have Russian and Belarusian number plates will not be able to move goods on EU

territory, the Russian customs service says. This comes after the EU on Friday formally adopted new sanctions against Russia, including bans on the import of coal, wood, chemicals and other products, while also preventing many Russian vessels and trucks from accessing the bloc.

3:31 p.m. S&P lowers Russia's foreign currency ratings to "selective default" on increased risks that Moscow will not be able and willing to honor its commitments to foreign debtholders. Facing waves of sanctions over its invasion of Ukraine, Russia could face its first sovereign external default in over a century after it made arrangements to make an international bond repayment in rubles this week, even though the payment was due in dollars.

An Amnesty International Activist Protests Outside the Russian Embassy in Mexico City on March 24. Russia Has Revoked the Registration of 15 Foreign Organizations, Including Amnesty and Human Rights Watch. © Reuters

11:50 a.m. Russia's justice ministry says it has revoked the registration of 15 foreign organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. The Russian units

of the 15 organizations, which include the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, "were excluded due to the discovery of violations of the current legislation of the Russian Federation," the ministry said in a statement on Friday.

The decision, which did not give details of any violations, was announced days after New York-based HRW said it had found "several cases of Russian military forces committing laws-of-war violations" in Ukraine. Russia has repeatedly denied war crimes allegations by Ukraine and Western countries during its six-week-long invasion of Ukraine and denies targeting civilians.

Protestors Take Part in a Demonstration "Oil Embargo - if Not Now, When?" In Front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin on April 8. © Reuters

4:10 a.m. Germany is working to end imports of Russian oil and believes it may do so this year, Chancellor Olaf Scholz says in London during a news conference with U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

The European Union is studying ways to phase out its imports of Russian oil, according to EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. But ending German dependence on Russian natural gas poses a higher hurdle. No timeline has been set for such a transition.

The U.K. has announced plans to phase out imports of Russian coal and crude oil by the end of 2022, followed by gas imports at an early date.

3:17 a.m. The U.S. believes Russia used a short-range ballistic missile to strike a railway station in east Ukraine on Friday, a senior U.S. defense official says. Ukraine said at least 50 people were killed and many more wounded in the strike.

2:15 a.m. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen pledges to offer a speedier start to Ukraine's bid to become a member of the European Union. "It will not as usual be a matter of years to form this opinion but I think a matter of weeks," she says.

1:45 a.m. Slovakia has donated its S-300 air defense system to Ukraine, Prime Minister Eduard Heger says.

12:30 a.m. The Czech Republic has delivered tanks, multiple rocket launchers, howitzers and infantry fighting vehicles to Ukraine among military shipments that have reached hundreds of millions of dollars and will continue, reports Reuters, citing two Czech defense sources.

Monday, April 11

10:30 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has called on South Korea to send weapons to his country to defend its people against a Russian invasion.

In his 17-minute speech to South Korean lawmakers, Zelenskyy showed images of the ravages of war in Mariupol and other cities.

Seoul's defense ministry on Monday said it had rejected a request by the Ukrainian defense minister for anti-aircraft weapons, Reuters reports.

6:00 p.m. Witnessing Russia's struggles in Ukraine, China is likely reassessing any plans it had to make a move on Taiwan, a prominent Japanese scholar on China says in Tokyo.

"If China does possess a scenario of invading Taiwan, it will rethink, push back or at least make sure that all preparations are made before proceeding. It is unthinkable that they will decide to bring forward an invasion," Shin Kawashima, a professor at the University of Tokyo, says at the Japan National Press Club. Read more.

5:44 p.m. Tens of thousands of people have likely been killed in Russia's assault on the southeastern Ukrainian city of Mariupol, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. "Mariupol has been destroyed, there are tens of thousands of dead, but even despite this, the Russians are not stopping their offensive," Zelenskyy said in a video address to South Korean lawmakers.

5:14 p.m. Russia has destroyed S-300 anti-aircraft missile systems which had been supplied to Ukraine by a European country, Russia's defense ministry said. The ministry said that Russian sea-launched Kalibr missiles on Sunday destroyed four S-300 launchers which were concealed in a hangar on the outskirts of the Ukrainian city of Dnipro. Russia said 25 Ukrainian troops were hit in the attack. Russia did not say which European country had supplied the S-300 systems.

10:50 a.m. A senior U.S. official in Washington said Russia has appointed Gen. Alexander Dvornikov, one of its most-seasoned military chiefs, to oversee the invasion, The Associated Press reports. Dvornikov gained prominence as head of Russian forces deployed to Syria in 2015 to shore up President Bashar Assad's government during the country's devastating civil war. U.S. officials say he has a record of brutality against civilians in Syria and other war theaters.

Chechen Republic Leader Ramzan Kadyrov, Left, Meets With Commanders in the City of Mariupol, Ukraine on March 28. © Reuters

9:41 a.m. Ramzan Kadyrov, head of Russia's republic of Chechnya, says there will be an offensive by Russian forces on the besieged port of Mariupol, Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities. "There will be an offensive ... not only on Mariupol, but also on other places, cities and villages," Kadyrov said in a video posted on his Telegram channel. "Luhansk and Donetsk -- we will fully liberate in the first place ... and then take Kyiv and all other cities." He said, "I assure you: Not one step will be taken back."

5:00 a.m. Ukraine's economic output will likely contract by a staggering 45.1% this year as Russia's invasion has shuttered businesses, slashed exports and destroyed productive capacity, the World Bank said in a new assessment of the war's economic impacts. The World Bank also forecast Russia's 2022 GDP output to fall 11.2% due to punishing financial sanctions imposed by the United States and its Western allies on Russia's banks, state-owned enterprises and other institutions.

3:30 a.m. Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer will meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on Monday, he said, adding he hoped to help build bridges between Russia and Ukraine and stop the "war of aggression." Nehammer's meeting would be the first face-to-face encounter between Putin and a European Union leader since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, triggering a broad Western effort to isolate Moscow.

"I'm going to meet Vladimir #Putin in Moscow tomorrow," Nehammer wrote on Twitter. "We are militarily neutral, but (have) a clear position on the Russian war of aggression against #Ukraine," he wrote, referring to Austria's position. "It must stop! It needs humanitarian corridors, ceasefire & full investigation of war crimes."

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov confirmed to RIA news agency that Putin would be holding talks with Nehammer on Monday.

2:50 a.m. The death toll from a missile strike on the train station in Ukraine's Kramatorsk has risen to 57 people, Donetsk region governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said. Kyrylenko said 109 people were wounded in the attack, which Ukraine has blamed on Russia. Moscow has denied responsibility, saying the missile was Ukrainian.

Tuesday, April 12

4:00 p.m. All options would be on the table in response to any use of chemical weapons in Ukraine by Russia, British armed forces minister James Heappey said. British foreign minister Liz Truss on Monday said the country was working with its partners to verify the details of reports Russian forces may have used chemical agents in an attack on Mariupol. "There are some things that are beyond the pale, and the use of chemical weapons will get a response and all options are on the table for what that response could be," Heappey told Sky News on Tuesday.

2:20 p.m. Fighting in eastern Ukraine will intensify over the next two to three weeks as Russia continues to refocus its efforts there, the U.K.'s Ministry of Defense tweeted in a regular bulletin. Russian attacks remain focused on Ukrainian positions near Donetsk and Luhansk, with further fighting around Kherson and Mykolaiv and a renewed push toward Kramatorsk, British military intelligence said. The report also said Russian forces continue to withdraw from Belarus in order to redeploy in support of operations in eastern Ukraine.

Graves of civilians killed during the Russian invasion lie in the southern Ukrainian port city of Mariupol on April 10. © Reuters

11:14 a.m. The mayor of the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol told the Associated Press that more than 10,000 civilians have died in the Russian siege of his city and that the death toll could surpass 20,000, with weeks of attacks and privation leaving bodies "carpeted through the streets."

Mayor Vadym Boychenko also accused Russian forces of having blocked humanitarian convoys from entering the city for weeks in an attempt to conceal the carnage there from the outside world.

11:00 a.m. Japan's Cabinet has approved additional sanctions against Russia, freezing assets of 398 Russian individuals, including President Vladimir Putin's daughters and the wife of Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

An Idemitsu Kosan Oil Refinery in Ichihara, East of Tokyo in Chiba Prefecture.
The Ukraine Crisis and a Weak Yen Have Pushed Up the Costs of Fuel and Raw Materials in Japan. (Kyodo via Reuters)

10:05 a.m. Japan's wholesale inflation remained near record-high levels in March as the Ukraine crisis and a weak yen pushed up the costs of fuel and raw materials, government data shows. The corporate goods price index, which measures the prices that companies charge each other for goods and services, rose 9.5% in March from a year earlier. That followed a revised 9.7% spike in February,

which was the fastest pace on record. The March index, at 112.0, was the highest level since December 1982.

6:24 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his daily video address late on Monday that Russia forces could use chemical weapons in Ukraine, but he did not say that chemical weapons have already been used. Unconfirmed reports earlier in the day had suggested that chemical weapons were used in the besieged southern port of Mariupol.

5:00 a.m. European Union officials discussing additional sanctions on Russia have failed to agree on a Russian oil embargo despite support from some countries.

Many of the ministers meeting in Luxembourg showed support for sanctions on Russian oil imports, top EU diplomat Josep Borrell says. But for others, such a ban would constitute an "asymmetric shock," he says. The bloc did agree to step up the delivery of weapons to Ukraine.

1:38 a.m. Axel Springer says it has hired the former Russian state TV worker who made international headlines last month by bursting onto her then-employer's live newscast to protest the war.

Marina Ovsyannikova will report for the German company's Welt brand as a freelance correspondent, including from Ukraine and Russia. She will write for the newspaper and regularly contribute to Welt news channel coverage, according to Axel Springer.

Ovsyannikova was fined 30,000 rubles ($373 at current rates) in mid-March and could still face further prosecution in Russia.

Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer Speaks During a News Conference in Moscow After Talks With Russian President Vladimir Putin. © Reuters

1:30 a.m. "This is not a friendly visit," Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer says in a statement issued by his office about talks just outside Moscow with Vladimir Putin.

This marked the first meeting with the Russian president by a European Union leader since the invasion of Ukraine started more than six weeks ago.

Nehammer has expressed solidarity with Ukraine and denounced apparent Russian war crimes. His government last week ordered the expulsion of a total of four Russian Embassy and Russian Consulate personnel over conduct that has "not been in accordance with their diplomatic status" -- generally a euphemism for spying.

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Graves of Civilians Killed During the Russian Invasion Lie in the Southern Ukrainian Port City of Mariupol on April 10. © Reuters

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4:30 p.m. The Russian defense ministry says that its missiles have destroyed ammunition depots in Ukraine's Khmelnytskyi and Kyiv regions. The ministry said Russian forces had struck an ammunition depot and hangar at the Starokostiantyniv air base in the Khmelnytskyi region, as well as an ammunition depot near Havrylivka north of the capital Kyiv.

An Armored Vehicle of Pro-Russian Forces in Ukraine's Southern Port City of Mariupol, April 11. There Have Been Unverified Reports of the Use of Chemical Agents in an Attack on the City. © Reuters

6:30 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin says Moscow's military operation in Ukraine will undoubtedly achieve what he said were its "noble" objectives. Speaking at an awards ceremony at the Vostochny Cosmodrome in the Russian Far East, Putin was quoted as saying by Russian news agencies that said Moscow had no other choice but to launch a military operation to protect Russia, and that a clash with Ukraine's anti-Russian forces had been inevitable. "Its goals are absolutely clear and noble," Putin said of Russia's military campaign.

Wednesday, April 13

9:51 p.m. Experts sent by member nations of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have found evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity by Russia in Ukraine, an initial report by the mission says, citing failures to take necessary precautions, act proportionately or spare sites like schools and hospitals.

Despite Russian denials, the report says a March 9 attack on Mariupol Maternity House and Children's Hospital was carried out by Russia and that those responsible committed a war crime. It also says the attack on Mariupol's Drama Theater on March 16 in which 300 people were killed was a war crime.

Russian Troops Load Ammunition Onto an Armored Vehicle During Fighting in Mariupol on April 12. © Reuters

7:08 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says 1,026 soldiers of Ukraine's 36th Marine Brigade, including 162 officers, have surrendered in the besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol.

Encircled by Russian troops for weeks, Mariupol has seen the fiercest fighting and the most comprehensive destruction since Russia invaded the country on Feb. 24. The main port on the Sea of Azov is the biggest target in the eastern Donbas region that Moscow now calls the focus of its campaign. If captured, Mariupol will be the first major city to fall since the war began. Its capture will help secure a land passage between separatist-held eastern areas and Crimea which Russia annexed and seized in 2014.

1:27 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin said peace talks with Ukraine had hit a dead end. Addressing the war in public for the first time since Russian forces retreated from northern Ukraine after they were halted at the gates of Kyiv, Putin promised that Russia would achieve all of its "noble" aims in Ukraine. "We have again returned to a dead-end situation for us," Putin, Russia's paramount leader since 1999, told a news briefing.

11:24 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden said for the first time that Russia's invasion of Ukraine amounts to genocide, a significant escalation of the president's rhetoric. Biden used the term in a speech at an ethanol plant in Iowa and later stood by the description as he prepared to board Air Force One.

"Yes, I called it genocide because it has become clearer and clearer that Putin is just trying to wipe out the idea of being able to be Ukrainian, and the evidence is mounting," Biden told reporters.

4:55 a.m. The World Bank is preparing a $1.5 billion support package for war-torn Ukraine and plans to aid developing countries struggling to keep up with surging food

and energy prices, World Bank President David Malpass said.

"The World Bank was created in 1944 to help Europe rebuild after World War II. As we did then, we will be ready to help Ukraine with reconstruction when the time comes," Malpass said. He added that the package was enabled by Monday's approval of $1 billion in International Development Association (IDA) aid by donor and recipient countries, along with a $100 million IDA payment to neighboring Moldova.

4:20 a.m. Ukraine says it has captured Viktor Medvedchuk -- a Ukrainian, pro-Russian oligarch with ties to Vladimir Putin -- in a special forces operation.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/KyivIndependent/status/1513945381842956294

12:30 a.m. The mayor of Mariupol says about 21,000 civilian residents of the port city had been killed since the start of Russia's invasion according to latest estimates.

In televised comments, Mariupol Mayor Vadym Boichenko said it had been difficult to calculate the exact number of casualties since street fighting had started.

Thursday, April 14

11:50 p.m. President Vladimir Putin says Russian energy exports should be rerouted to Africa and Latin America amid a push to diversify supplies from the West.

New oil and gas pipelines could be constructed in the hydrocarbon fields in West and East Siberia, he added.

5:48 p.m. Dmitry Medvedev, deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council, says that if Sweden and Finland join NATO, Russia will have to bolster its defenses in the region, including by deploying nuclear weapons. "There can be no more talk of any nuclear-free status for the Baltic -- the balance must be restored," he says. Medvedev, one of President Vladimir Putin's closest allies, was the country's president from 2008-2012.

3:50 p.m. Ukraine Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says nine humanitarian corridors have been agreed for Thursday to evacuate civilians, including by private car from the besieged city of Mariupol. Other evacuation routes are from Berdiansk, Tokmak and Enerhodar, and ones in the eastern Luhansk region will operate if occupying Russian forces stop their shelling, Vereshchuk added in a statement.

The Russian Navy's Guided Missile Cruiser Moskva Sails Back to Harbor Last November. The Country Now Says the Flagship of its Black Sea Fleet Has Been Seriously Damaged. © Reuters

12:30 p.m. Russia says the flagship of its Black Sea fleet was seriously damaged and its crew evacuated following an explosion that a Ukrainian official said was the result of a missile strike. Russia's defense ministry said a fire on the Moskva missile cruiser caused ammunition to blow up, Interfax news agency reported. It did not say what caused the fire but Maksym Marchenko, the Ukrainian governor of the region around the Black Sea port of Odesa, said the Moskva had been hit by two Ukrainian-made Neptune anti-ship cruise missiles.

10:06 a.m. South Korea's central bank raises its policy rate to the highest since August 2019 in an unexpected move, choosing not to wait for the formal appointment of a new governor before proceeding with its fight against surging inflation. Inflation in the country is expected to hold at decade-highs as Russia's invasion of Ukraine sends commodity prices soaring.

7:44 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden announces an additional $800 million in military assistance to Ukraine on Wednesday, expanding the scope of the systems provided to include heavy artillery ahead of a wider Russian assault expected in eastern Ukraine. The package, which brings the total military aid since Russian forces invaded in February to more than $2.5 billion, includes artillery systems, artillery rounds, armored personnel carriers and unmanned coastal defense boats.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Center, Attends a Joint News Briefing With the Presidents of Poland and the Baltic States on April 13.

5:12 a.m. The presidents of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia met President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Wednesday, calling for increased military support for Ukraine and for Russia to be held accountable for the actions of its troops on the ground. Before meeting Zelenskyy, the four presidents visited areas in the Kyiv region where hundreds of slain civilians have been discovered after the Russian withdrawal. Moscow has denied responsibility and dismissed allegations its troops

committed war crimes there as fake news. "This is not war, this is terrorism," said Polish President Andrzej Duda.

2:28 a.m. A "global cease-fire" in Ukraine does not seem possible at the moment, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres tells a news conference. But "lots of things" can be done to guarantee the evacuation of civilians from areas of fighting and to guarantee humanitarian access, Guterres adds.

1:10 a.m. Finland will decide whether to apply to join NATO in the next few weeks, not months, Prime Minister Sanna Marin says, underlining a shift in security perspectives since Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Friday, April 15

11:00 p.m. Russia appears poised to capture the strategic port city of Mariupol and escalate attacks across Ukraine's southeast after bruising setbacks, including the sinking of the Moskva, the flagship of Moscow's Black Sea fleet.

The Russians are staging attack helicopters at the border with Ukraine and bringing in soldiers and artillery, the Pentagon says.

7:00 p.m. Russia has warned the U.S. of "unpredictable consequences" if Washington keeps arming Ukraine, The Washington Post reports. "We call on the United States and its allies to stop the irresponsible militarization of Ukraine, which implies unpredictable consequences for regional and international security," the Post quoted Russia saying in a diplomatic note to the U.S.

5:30 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says it has struck a military target on the edge of Kyiv overnight with cruise missiles and promises more strikes against the Ukrainian capital in response to Ukrainian attacks on Russian targets. Russian forces have also taken full control of the Ilyich Steel Plant in the besieged port city of Mariupol, which has been encircled by Russian troops for weeks, the ministry says.

3:30 p.m. Russia could end up in default after trying to service its dollar bonds in rubles due to Western sanctions, Moody's says. Russia made a payment due on April 4 on two sovereign bonds -- maturing in 2022 and 2042 -- in rubles rather than the dollars it was mandated to pay under the securities' terms. Russia "therefore may be considered a default under Moody's definition if not cured by 4 May, which is the end of the grace period," Moody's said in a

statement. "The bond contracts have no provision for repayment in any other currency other than dollars."

2:30 p.m. After Russia lost its Black Sea fleet flagship Moskva, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in his nightly address paid homage to all "those who halted the progress of the endless convoys of Russian military equipment ... Those who showed that Russian ships can go ... down to the bottom."

Firefighters Work on Clearing Debris in Pushcha-Vodytsya, Kyiv, Ukraine, in This Still Image Taken From a Handout Video Uploaded on April 14, 2022. (State Emergency Service of Ukraine/Handout) © Reuters

9:30 a.m. Powerful explosions were heard in Kyiv early on Friday, and air raid sirens blared across Ukraine as residents braced for new Russian attacks after Moscow's lead warship in the Black Sea sank following a fire. The explosions appeared to be among the most significant in Ukraine's capital region since Russian troops pulled back from the area earlier this month in preparation for battles in the south and east. Ukraine claimed responsibility for sinking

the Moskva, saying the Soviet-era flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet was struck by one of its missiles. The vessel sank late on Thursday as it was being towed to port, Russia's defense ministry said.

8:00 a.m. A total of 2,557 people left Ukrainian cities through humanitarian corridors on Thursday, Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says. Of them, 289 were able to flee the besieged southern port of Mariupol by providing their own transportation, according to a Vereshchuk social media post.

5:00 a.m. The Russian missile cruiser Moskva has sunk in the Black Sea, Russian media RIA and RT report, citing the Defense Ministry. The warship sank in stormy seas after suffering damage from an ammunition fire onboard, the reports say. The Ukrainian side claims to have struck the flagship of the Russian Black Sea fleet off Odesa with Neptune anti-ship missiles.

3:33 a.m. France will move back its embassy in Ukraine to the capital Kyiv from the Western city of Lviv "very soon," Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian tells Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba in a phone call. The embassy was moved to Lviv in early March as conditions worsened on the ground.

2:15 a.m. Over 400 Russian diplomats have been expelled from at least 20 countries over the invasion of Ukraine, as nations in Europe and beyond respond to reports of hundreds of civilian bodies left near Kyiv following a retreat by Russian forces.

In total, 443 diplomats had been or were set to be expelled as of April 8, according to the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign

Affairs. Forty-five were in neighboring Poland, more than in any other country. Slovakia has decided to kick out 38 Russian diplomats, while Slovenia moved to expel 33. Read more.

Saturday, April 16

11:29 p.m. Russian air raids and missile strikes hit Kyiv and other major Ukrainian cities as Moscow launches more long-range attacks following the sinking of its Black Sea Fleet's flagship. Moscow says its warplanes had struck a tank repair factory in Kyiv. An explosion was heard and smoke seen in the southeastern Darnytskyi district. The mayor said at least one person had died and medics were fighting to save others.

In the besieged port of Mariupol, scene of the war's heaviest fighting and worst humanitarian catastrophe, Russian troops press their advances, hoping to make up for their failure to capture Kyiv by seizing their first big prize of the war.

10:15 p.m. Russia bars entry for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, Defense Secretary Ben Wallace and 10 other British government members and politicians, Reuters reports. The move was taken "in view of the unprecedented hostile action by the British government, in particular the imposition of sanctions against senior Russian officials," the Russian Foreign Ministry says, adding that it will expand the list.

5:30 p.m. The dramatic sinking of Russia's guided missile cruiser Moskva -- the flagship of its Black Sea fleet -- on Thursday was followed by a U.S. defense official telling reporters that Moscow immediately moved its four to five remaining ships in those waters south, farther from Ukraine.

These rapid developments put the spotlight once again on Turkey, which sits across the Black Sea and controls the

those
and the

maritime
passage
between
waters

Mediterranean Sea. [Read more]

Members of the Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces Attend Military Drills, as Russia's Attack on Ukraine Continues, in Kyiv Region on April 15. © Reuters

1:03 p.m. Explosions were heard in the early hours on Saturday in Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, and the Western city of Lviv, according to local media reports. Air raid sirens sounded across much of Ukraine early on Saturday. The mayor of Kyiv said rescuers and medics were working at the site of a blast on the outskirts of the city.

9:44 a.m. Zelenskyy on Friday told CNN that between 2,500 to 3,000 Ukrainian troops have died so far in the war with Russia and that another 10,000 have been wounded, but there was no count of civilian casualties. He told the U.S. TV network that 19,000 to 20,000 Russian soldiers had been killed in the war. Moscow said last month that 1,351 Russian soldiers had been killed and 3,825 wounded.

Ukrainian Soldiers Take Part in a Funeral in Lviv, Ukraine, on April 13. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Says Between 2,500 to 3,000 Ukrainian Troops Have Died So Far in the War With Russia. © Reuters

3:00 a.m. Two Ukrainian Neptune missiles hit the Russian flagship Moskva in the Black Sea, U.S. media report, quoting a senior defense official, providing the first American

confirmation that the sinking of the Russian cruiser was the result of a Ukrainian strike.

The confirmation comes after Ukrainian forces said Thursday that they had attacked the cruiser Moskva. Russian officials claimed that the ship had experienced a fire. The Pentagon observed some Russian sailors evacuating the ship in lifeboats as the vessel burned.

Sunday, April 17

11:30 p.m. Remaining Ukrainian forces in the southern port of Mariupol are still fighting and continue to defy a Russian demand that they surrender, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal says.

"The city still has not fallen," Shmyhal tells ABC's "This Week" program, adding that Ukrainian soldiers continue to control some parts of the city. Russia gave Ukrainian soldiers in the city an ultimatum on Sunday to lay down their arms, Reuters reports.

Володимир Зеленський @ZelenskyyUa
Ukraine government official

Discussed with IMF Managing Director @KGeorgieva the issue of ensuring Ukraine's financial stability & preparations for post-war reconstruction. We have clear plans for now, as well as a vision of prospects. I'm sure cooperation between the IMF & 🇺🇦 will continue to be fruitful.

12:41 AM · Apr 18, 2022

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Monday, April 18

10:29 p.m. Two British fighters captured in Ukraine by Russian forces appear on Russian state TV, asking to be exchanged for a Ukrainian ally of President Vladimir Putin who is being held by Ukrainian authorities.

It was unclear how freely the two men were able to talk. Both spoke separately after being prompted by an unidentified man. The Putin ally, pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk, was shown asking to be swapped in a video released around the same time by Ukraine's SBU intelligence service via social media.

5:44 p.m. Russia's Central Bank should be able to lower its key rate faster and create conditions for more affordable loans, Gov. Elvira Nabiullina says. The central bank more than doubled its key interest rate to 20% when Russia was hit by international sanctions after sending its forces into Ukraine in February, but then cut it this month to 17%, flagging a challenging economic environment and a slowdown in inflation.

5:30 p.m. Russia says it has launched mass strikes overnight on the Ukrainian military and associated military targets, using its air force, missile forces, artillery and air defense systems to hit hundreds of targets across its southern neighbor. The Russian defense ministry said in a statement that air-launched missiles had destroyed 16 Ukrainian military facilities overnight, including five command posts, a fuel depot and three ammunition warehouses, as well as Ukrainian armor and forces. It said those strikes took place in the Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Dnipropetrovsk regions and in the port of

Mykolayiv, and that the Russian air force had launched strikes against 108 areas where it said Ukrainian forces and armor were concentrated.

4:44 p.m. Japan marine transport company Mitsui O.S.K. Lines says it will stop arranging a spot shipment of Russian coal. The company is also planning not to hire any more Russian sailors in the short term. Toshiaki Tanaka, executive officer of the company, told reporters that most Russian coal shipments are contracted on a short-term basis and spot shipment deals are decreasing among Japanese customers.

4:20 p.m. Six people were killed and eight wounded in a missile strike on the western Ukraine city of Lviv on Monday morning, regional governor Maksym Kozystkiy says. Three

missiles hit military infrastructure while one struck a car tire replacement facility, he said.

3:20 p.m. The mayor of the western Ukraine city of Lviv, Andriy Sadovyi, says on Facebook that five missiles struck the city and that emergency services were responding to the attack. He said more details would follow. Witnesses said multiple explosions believed to be caused by missiles struck the city early Monday as the country braces for an all-out Russian assault in the east, The Associated Press reported. Lviv and the rest of western Ukraine have been less affected by the fighting than other parts of the country, and the city was considered to be a relatively safe haven.

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Left, Speaks With European Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen in Kyiv on April 8. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service/ Handout via Reuters)

8:57 a.m. Ukraine has completed a questionnaire which will mark a starting point for the European Union to decide on membership for Kyiv, says Ihor Zhovkva, deputy head of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. European Commission

President Ursula von der Leyen handed the questionnaire to Zelenskyy during her visit to Kyiv on April 8, pledging a speedier start to Ukraine's bid to become a member of the EU following Russia's invasion of the country. "Today, I can say that the document has been completed by the Ukrainian side," Zhovkva told the Ukrainian public broadcaster on Sunday evening. The EC will need to issue a recommendation on Ukraine's compliance with necessary membership criteria, he added.

4:24 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says he discussed the country's financial stability and postwar reconstruction with Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the International Monetary Fund.

"We have clear plans for now, as well as a vision of prospects," Zelenskyy says in a tweet. "I'm sure cooperation between the IMF & Ukraine will continue to be fruitful.”

Tuesday, April 19

11:45 p.m. Russia's economy will shrink 8.5% this year in the wake of economic sanctions imposed by many of its trade partners, the latest International Monetary Fund forecasts show, while Ukraine's is projected to contract as much as 35%.

"Economic damage from the conflict will contribute to a significant slowdown in global growth in 2022," the IMF says.

The conflict has overshadowed Asia, with rising commodity prices and weaker European demand for exports dragging on economies fighting to get back on track after coronavirus-induced slumps.

8:12 p.m. Russia's siege of the city of Mariupol has further complicated negotiations with Ukraine and it is hard to say when direct talks might resume, Ukrainian negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak says. In written responses to questions from Reuters, Podolyak said he believed Russia was banking on strengthening its position through a new offensive in eastern Ukraine.

7:00 p.m. Russian forces have taken control of the city of Kreminna in eastern Ukraine, and Ukrainian troops have withdrawn from the city, the regional governor says. "Kreminna is under the control of the 'Orcs' (Russians). They have entered the city," Serhiy Gaidai, the governor of the Luhansk region, said in a briefing.

6:00 p.m. Russia calls on Ukrainian forces and foreign fighters holed up in the Azovstal metallurgical plant in the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol to lay down their arms by noon Moscow time if they want to live. Mariupol, which has been encircled by Russian troops for weeks, has seen the fiercest fighting and most comprehensive destruction since Russia sent troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24. Ukrainian authorities said on Monday that no fewer than 1,000 civilians were hiding in underground shelters beneath the vast Azovstal plant, adding that Russia was dropping heavy bombs on the Ukrainian-held factory in the besieged city.

3:00 p.m. The Ukrainian military's general staff says Russian forces are focusing their efforts on taking full control over the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the east. It noted that a "new phase of war" began Monday when "the occupiers made an attempt to break through our defenses along nearly the entire frontline in the Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv regions." It said in a statement issued early Tuesday that "the Russian military has continued to

blockade and shell Mariupol and to deal missile strikes on other cities."

1:00 p.m. Ukrainian forces have struck a village near Russia's border with Ukraine, wounding one resident, the governor of the Russian province of Belgorod says. It was not immediately clear whether the strike on the village of Golovchino that figured in posts by Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov on messaging app Telegram was carried out by artillery, mortars, missiles or was an aerial attack. This month, Russia accused Ukraine, which it invaded in late February, of carrying out a helicopter strike on a fuel depot in Belgorod, as well as shelling villages there several times, and firing missiles at an ammunition depot.

10:00 a.m. The Biden administration says it is barring antisatellite missile testing by the U.S., a move that White House officials say is meant to underscore its hopes of establishing new norms for military action in space. Washington has sharply criticized Russia and China for conducting antisatellite missile tests, although it also used an interceptor missile fired from a U.S. Navy warship more than 14 years ago to destroy a malfunctioning spy satellite. The issue is one that's taken on greater urgency after Russia in November launched a missile to destroy a defunct Soviet-era satellite.

7:00 a.m. Russian forces have begun a "battle for Donbas," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says, after senior officials say Moscow had launched a new offensive push along most of Ukraine's eastern flank.

"A very large part of the entire Russian army is now focused on this offensive," Zelenskyy says.

"No matter how many Russian soldiers are driven there, we will fight," he says. "We will defend ourselves."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Speaks On April 18. © Reuters

3:12 a.m. At least 1,000 civilians -- mostly women, children and the elderly -- are hiding in underground shelters beneath the vast Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol, the city council says, adding that Russia is dropping heavy bombs onto the Ukrainian-held factory in the besieged port city.

Street battles have occurred in Mariupol over the past week as Russian forces seek to take full control of the city from Ukraine.

Wednesday, April 20

10:29 p.m. A Russian ultimatum to Ukrainian troops in Mariupol to surrender or die expires with no mass capitulation, but the commander of a unit believed to be holding out in the besieged city says his forces could survive just days or hours. In the ruins of Mariupol, Russia was hitting the last main Ukrainian stronghold, the Azovstal steel plant, with bunker-buster bombs, Kyiv says.

"This is our appeal to the world. It may be our last. We may have only a few days or hours left," Maj. Serhiy Volyna says in a video uploaded to Facebook. "The enemy units are dozens of times larger than ours, they have dominance in the air, in artillery, in ground troops, in equipment and in tanks."

10:08 p.m. The number of people fleeing Ukraine to escape Russia's invasion has passed 5 million, in Europe's worst refugee crisis since the end of World War II, the U.N. refugee agency says. Most refugees have crossed to the European Union through border points in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania where volunteers and governments have scrambled to help those arriving, mostly women and children, find jobs and accommodation.

9:10 p.m. Russia's Defense Ministry proposes that relatives of soldiers killed in Ukraine should have to apply to military rather than civilian authorities for compensation payments, saying it looks to "limit the circle of people" with information around the country's war losses. Russia already classifies military deaths as state secrets even in times of peace and has not updated its official casualty figures in Ukraine for nearly four weeks.

7:47 p.m. Russia is not planning to stop foreign journalists from entering the country but it is tightening visa rules for those from "unfriendly countries," a deputy foreign minister says. Yevgeny Ivanov told parliament this was in response to moves by the European Union and other countries to make it harder for the Russian business community to obtain visas. "We have responded by making it harder for journalists from unfriendly countries to obtain visas. They will now get a single-entry visa and pay a higher visa fee," he said.

Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov Says Russian Metals Companies Are Facing "Hostile Attitudes" From Those Moscow Refers to As "Unfriendly Countries." (Sputnik/Sergey Guneev/Kremlin via REUTERS)

7:07 p.m. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov says Russian metals companies are facing "hostile attitudes" from those Moscow calls "unfriendly countries," and that Russia will formulate a plan to combat this. "We are among world leaders in this industry, and our metallurgists have begun to face hostile attitudes... our companies are experiencing some difficulties," Peskov says during a conference call with reporters.

Russia is a major producer of metals including aluminum, nickel, palladium, copper, steel and gold. Western countries have imposed sanctions against some wealthy Russians with large shareholdings in metals companies.

3:47 p.m. Ukraine hopes to evacuate 6,000 women, children and elderly people from the besieged city of Mariupol on Wednesday if a preliminary agreement with Russia holds, the city's mayor said. Mayor Vadym

Boichenko, who has left Mariupol, said 90 buses were waiting to head to the devastated southern port city. He cautioned that the agreement was still only a preliminary arrangement and that about 100,000 civilians remained there.

If the deal holds, it will be the first agreement on creating a safe corridor for civilians to flee from Mariupol to other Ukrainian cities since March 5. That agreement quickly collapsed, however, and many residents have been trapped there for weeks without power, running water and other supplies.

2:22 p.m. Japan's parliament gives the green light to strip Russia of most-favored-nation trading status, a move taken in unison with other countries to punish Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine. Russia will lose benefits such as low tariffs and few trade barriers. Other changes enacted include amending the foreign exchange and trade law to prevent cryptocurrencies from being used as a loophole to sidestep economic sanctions on Russia.

Following the legislative move, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government will set ordinances stipulating that all imports from Russia will be subject to higher duties until the end of March 2023, including a 5% tariff on salmon, from the current 3.5%, and a 6% duty imposed on crabs, from 4%.

President Joe Biden Spoke With Leaders of Japan, France and Other Allies on April 19 About Providing Security Guarantees for Ukraine. © Reuters

3:11 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron and leaders of other allies on Tuesday discussed how to provide security guarantees to Ukraine during and after the war with Russia, a French official says. "It would be military supplies so that it can deal with a new attack or, possibly, guarantees that would see us get involved if Ukraine is attacked in a way where we could assess how to assist it," the official said.

Meanwhile, the U.S. will send more artillery to Ukraine, Biden tells reporters after the call with allied leaders. Japan's Foreign Ministry says Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told his counterparts during the call that Tokyo plans to extend $300 million in loans to Ukraine, up from an original offer of $100 million.

Thursday, April 21

U.S. Military Aid for Ukraine Is Unloaded at Boryspil International Airport Outside Kyiv in February. © Reuters

11:04 p.m. President Joe Biden addresses Americans from the White House, as he announces an additional $800 million security assistance package for Ukraine. The new arms package will be roughly the same size as an $800 million one announced last week.

Ukraine also will receive direct aid of $500 million to help its government continue critical operations, on top of $500 million announced by Biden in March, the U.S. Treasury Department says.

9:42 p.m. India differs from Japanese lawmaker Sanae Takaichi in her statement that New Delhi refused the landing of a Japan Self-Defense Forces plane meant to deliver humanitarian aid to displaced Ukrainians. Arindam Bagchi, spokesperson for India's External Affairs Ministry, says New Delhi received a request from Japan for permission to land in Mumbai to pick up humanitarian

supplies from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees depot there for Ukraine and neighboring countries.

"We have conveyed our approval for picking up such supplies from India using commercial aircraft," Bagchi says, adding that India also approved a request for overflight clearance for Japanese SDF aircraft carrying humanitarian cargo for Ukraine.

When told that a Japanese official said permission was denied for the landing of an SDF aircraft, Bagchi responded, "I'm hesitant to comment on somebody else's comments that I might not have fully seen."

5:30 p.m. President Vladimir Putin orders the Russian military to cancel plans to storm the Azovstal plant in the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol and says he wants it to continue to be hermetically blockaded instead. Putin gave the order to Sergei Shoigu, his defense minister, who had previously told Putin that more than 2,000 Ukrainian fighters were still holed up in the vast plant, which has a large underground component to it. "There is no need to climb into these catacombs and crawl underground through these industrial facilities," Putin said. "Block off this industrial area so that a fly cannot pass through." Putin also congratulated Shoigu for what he called the successful military operation to "liberate Mariupol" and asked him to pass on his thanks to Russian troops.

India Has Refused To Allow a Japan Self-Defense Force Plane Meant To Deliver Humanitarian Aid to Displaced Ukrainians to Land in the Country, a Top Liberal Democratic Party Official Said April 21.

2:20 p.m. Russian forces are advancing from staging areas in Donbas towards Kramatorsk, which continues to be hit by rocket attacks, a British military update says. High levels of Russian air activity continue as it seeks to provide close air support for its offensive in eastern Ukraine, and to suppress and destroy Ukrainian air defense capabilities, the UK Ministry of Defense tweeted in a regular bulletin. "Russia likely desires to demonstrate significant successes ahead of their annual 9th May Victory Day celebrations."

11:50 a.m. India has refused to allow a Japan Self-Defense Force plane meant to deliver humanitarian aid to displaced Ukrainians to land in the country, Sanae Takaichi, policy chief of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party says. The Japanese government had planned to have an SDF plane load supplies such as blankets at a stopover in India and transport them to Ukraine's neighbors, including Poland and Romania. The aid was requested by the United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees. Takaichi criticized Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government over the matter, saying, "Clearly, the government has not done enough groundwork."

Ramzan Kadyrov, Head of Russia's Chechen Republic and a Top Ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Says the Last Stronghold of Resistance in the Ukrainian City of Mariupol Will Be Taken by April 21. © Reuters

8:40 a.m. A top ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin says Russian forces will seize the last main stronghold of resistance in the besieged city of Mariupol on Thursday, after Ukraine proposed talks on evacuating troops and civilians there. Mariupol would be the biggest city to be seized by Russia since invading Ukraine eight weeks ago. "Before lunchtime, or after lunch, Azovstal will be completely under the control of the forces of the Russian Federation," Ramzan Kadyrov, the head of Russia's republic of Chechnya, whose forces have been fighting in Ukraine.

A Resident Walks Along a Street Past Burnt out Buses in Mariupol on April 19. © Reuters

7:30 a.m. Russia's war in Ukraine overshadows the Group of 20 gatherings in Washington this week as officials from multiple Western countries quit a closed-door meeting in protest when the Russian delegation began to speak.

The leavers included U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, British Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak, and Canadian Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland.

"The world's democracies will not stand idly by in the face of continued Russian aggression and war crimes," Freeland tweets with a group photo. "Today Canada and a number of our democratic partners walked out of the G20 plenary when Russia sought to intervene." Read more.

5:05 a.m. Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak says his side is ready for a "special round of

negotiations" in the besieged city of Mariupol with "without any conditions.

4:30 a.m. European Council President Charles Michel pledges European solidarity with Ukraine in a surprise visit to Kyiv and says justice must be done for alleged Russian war crimes.

"There are no words ... to explain what I feel. These are atrocities, these are war crimes. It must be punished. It will be punished," Michel told a joint news conference with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv.

Michel, the head of the European Council, which represents the European Union's 27 member states, visited the town of Borodianka northwest of Kyiv before holding talks with Zelenskyy in the capital.

12:08 a.m. Tennis players from Russia and Belarus will not be allowed to compete at this year's Wimbledon due to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, the Grand Slam organizer All England Lawn Tennis Club says.

A ban on Russian players prevents world men's No. 2 Daniil Medvedev and 15th-ranked woman Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova from competing. Women's world No. 4 Aryna Sabalenka and two-time Grand Slam champion Victoria Azarenka of Belarus also will be affected.

Local Resident Tamara, 71, Cries in Front of an Apartment Building Destroyed During Ukraine-Russia Conflict in the Southern Port City of Mariupol. © Reuters

Friday, April 22

6:50 p.m. With war raging in Ukraine and tensions rising in East Asia, former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe warns that

Japan will become a "laughing stock" if it doesn't lift its defense budget in line with NATO countries.

"Every NATO country, without exception, has agreed to raise its defense budget to 2% of GDP," the hawkish ex-leader says at the Japan Forum for Strategic Studies in Tokyo. "If Japan says it won't raise its budget much, everyone will be surprised." Read more.

5:19 p.m. Russia plans to take full control of Donbas and southern Ukraine as part of the second phase of the military operation, the deputy commander of Russia's central military district said, the Interfax news agency reports. He was also quoted as saying that Russia planned to forge a land corridor between Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, and Donbas.

Russia Plans To Take Control of Ukraine's Donbas Region and the Country's South, Creating a Corridor to Russian-Controlled Crimea, the Deputy Commander of Russia's Central Military District Said on April 22. © Reuters

3:55 p.m. Anheuser-Busch InBev says it will sell its stake in the Russian joint-venture AB InBev Efes, which will result in a $1.1 billion impairment charge in its first quarter results,

according to Reuters. The announcement comes after similar moves by rival brewers Carlsberg and Heineken.

2:51 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to blockade the Azovstal steel plant in Ukraine likely indicates a desire to contain resistance in Mariupol, a British military update says. "A full ground assault by Russia on the plant would likely incur significant Russian casualties, further decreasing their overall combat effectiveness," the update adds. Heavy shelling continued in the eastern Donbas region as Russia seeks to advance further toward settlements, including Krasnyy Lyman, Buhayikva, Barvinkove, Lyman and Popasna, the U.K. Ministry of Defense tweeted in a regular bulletin.

A Satellite Image Taken April 3, Shows an Aerial View of a Cemetery and What Appear To Be Freshly Dug Graves in Manhush, Near Mariupol, Ukraine. © Reuters

12:20 p.m. Satellite images show what appear to be mass graves near Mariupol, and local officials accuse Russia of burying up to 9,000 Ukrainian civilians there in an effort to conceal the slaughter taking place in the siege of the port

city. The images emerged on Thursday, hours after Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed victory in the battle for the Mariupol, despite the presence of an estimated 2,000 Ukrainian fighters who were still holed up at a giant steel mill. Satellite image provider Maxar Technologies released the photos, which it said showed more than 200 mass graves in a town where Ukrainian officials say the Russians have been burying Mariupol residents killed in the fighting.

11:40 a.m. Japan gave notice Friday of the planned sale of crude oil from state reserves as part of a coordinated effort by the International Energy Agency to stabilize the market amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine. An auction will be held May 10 for about 4.8 million barrels of crude oil from three reserve bases, part of the 9 million barrels Tokyo is set to release from national stockpiles, according to the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry.

4:45 a.m. Physical damage to Ukraine's buildings and infrastructure from Russia's invasion has reached roughly $60 billion so far, according to World Bank President David Malpass.

This does not include the growing economic costs of the war to Ukraine, Malpass tells a World Bank conference on financial assistance to the country.

"Of course the war is still ongoing, so those costs are rising," he says.

Saturday, April 23

10:45 p.m. Ukraine's state energy firm Naftogaz says a third of gas exports from Russia to the European Union via Ukraine could be lost if Russian forces continue disrupting operations in newly occupied areas. Russia is the 27-nation EU's top gas supplier and the invasion has raised concerns about possible disruptions, which sent prices to record highs in March.

7:07 p.m. Berlin's Pilecki Institute, which is dedicated to researching 20th century history including Nazi crimes in World War II, is tapping that experience to collect testimonies from refugees about possible war crimes in Ukraine. The institute, named after a Polish cavalry officer who risked his life to document the situation in the Auschwitz concentration camp during World War II, says it had started its own initiative to document war crimes through interviews with refugees.

"We are collecting all witness reports about war crimes in Ukraine relying on the experience we have as an institution that normally deals with...the voices of victims of the Second World War," Mateusz Falkowski, deputy head of the institute, tells Reuters.

A Firefighter Works at the Site of a Hospital That Was Bombed in the Donetsk Region of Ukraine as Russia's Attack Continues. (Photo by State Donetsk Region Police via Reuters)

2:10 p.m. Russian forces have made no major gains in the last 24 hours despite increased activity, as Ukrainian

counterattacks continue to hinder their efforts, British military intelligence says. Despite Russia's claimed conquest of the port city of Mariupol, heavy fighting continues to frustrate Moscow's attempts to capture the city, impeding their progress in the Donbas region, the Ministry of Defence tweeted in a regular bulletin.

8:30 a.m. The Moldovan foreign ministry says it had summoned Moscow's ambassador on Friday to express "deep concern" about comments by a top military commander, who suggested the country's Russian-speaking population was being oppressed. "These statements are unfounded," the foreign ministry said on its website. "Moldova ... is a neutral state and this principle must be respected by all international actors, including the Russian Federation."

5:23 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday said allies were finally delivering the weapons that Kyiv had asked for, adding the arms would help save the lives of thousands of people. In a late night video address, Zelenskyy also said comments earlier in the day by a Russian commander about the need to link up with Moldova showed Moscow wanted to invade other countries. He warned that Russia's invasion of his country was just the beginning and that Moscow has designs on capturing other countries.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Plans To Meet With Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on April 26. © Reuters

1:40 a.m. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will visit Moscow to meet on Tuesday with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, associate spokesperson Eri Kaneko says.

The U.N. says Guterres will have a "working meeting and lunch" with Lavrov and "will be received" by Putin.

Guterres "wants to discuss with the leadership, what steps can be taken right now in order to silence the guns in order to help the people and in order to allow the people who need to get out to get out and have safe passage," Kaneko says.

"We are in contact with the government of Ukraine on preparations for a potential visit" there, she also says.

12:06 a.m. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson concedes that the war could continue until the end of 2023 and that a victory by Russia is "a realistic possibility." He cites its "huge

army" and notes that President Vladimir Putin is in a "very difficult political position because he's made a catastrophic blunder." Read more.

Sunday, April 24

9:00 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says he has talked with Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the eve of the latter's talks with Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

According to Reuters, Zelenskyy said he and Erdogan discussed the need for the immediate evacuation of civilians from the mostly Russian-occupied port city of Mariupol, including the surrounded but Ukrainian-held Azovstal factory, and the exchange of Ukrainian troops holed up at the plant.

5:41 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says its high-precision missiles struck nine Ukrainian military targets overnight, including four arms depots in the Kharkiv region where artillery weapons were stored. The ministry also said its missile and artillery forces destroyed a further four such arms depots in the same region and hit a facility in the Dnipropetrovsk region producing explosives for the Ukrainian army, Reuters reports.

11:00 a.m. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will visit Ankara before heading to Moscow next week to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin and then to Ukraine for talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, a U.N. statement says.

Guterres will visit the Turkish capital on Monday, where he will be received by President Tayyip Erdogan. The U.N. aid chief, Martin Griffiths, said on April 18 that Turkey was a valuable host for humanitarian talks between Ukraine and Russia.

Eri Kaneko, Guterres' associate spokesperson, told a news briefing on Friday that Guterres would head to Moscow on Tuesday and meet Putin.

4:17 a.m. The Organization for Security and Cooperation is working to secure the release of Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) members who had been detained in eastern Ukraine.

"The OSCE is extremely concerned that a number of SMM national mission members have been deprived of their liberty in Donetsk and Luhansk. The OSCE is using all available channels to facilitate the release of its staff," its media office tells Reuters.

On Friday, Britain's deputy ambassador to the Vienna-based OSCE had criticized Russia for refusing to extend the SMM's mission in Ukraine beyond March. "And now we have received alarming reports that Russia's proxies in Donbas are threatening Mission staff, equipment and premises and that Russian forces have taken SMM staff members captive," Deirdre Brown had said in her address.

2:27 a.m. Zelenskyy says he will meet Sunday in Kyiv with the U.S. secretary of state and secretary of defense during a news conference. The Ukrainian president says he will discuss with Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin the kinds of weapons that Ukraine needs to battle Russia's invasion, Reuters reports.

In an emotional news conference, Zelenskyy says he thinks Russia could use a nuclear weapon, but he does not want to believe that Moscow would. He says it is absolutely vital for Ukraine to obtain more weapons. "As soon as we have (more weapons), as soon as there are enough of them, believe me,

we will immediately retake this or that territory, which is temporarily occupied," he says.

12:12 a.m. Turkey closes its air space to military and civilian planes carrying troops from Russia to Syria after consultation with Moscow. "We closed airspace to Russia's military planes and even to civilian planes going to Syria and carrying soldiers," Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu tells reporters on a plane en route to Uruguay. He said permission had been given for three-month periods until April, and then the flights stopped.

Monday, April 25

9:50 p.m. President Joe Biden intends to nominate veteran U.S. diplomat Bridget Brink to serve as American ambassador to Ukraine, the White House says.

Brink, who has a 25-year career in diplomacy, now serves as U.S. ambassador to Slovakia.

A Destroyed Russian T-72 Tank in Ukraine. Russia Has Made Small Advances Since It Focused its Assault on the Donbas Region, the U.K. Says. © Reuters

5:50 p.m. Russia has warned the U.S. against sending more arms to Ukraine, Moscow's ambassador to Washington tells Russian state television. "We stressed the unacceptability of this situation when the United States of America pours weapons into Ukraine, and we demanded an end to this practice," Anatoly Antonov says in an interview with the Rossiya 24 TV channel.

Antonov says an official diplomatic note has been sent to Washington expressing Russia's concerns. Washington's top diplomat and its defense secretary met Ukrainian President Volodomyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Sunday, pledging new assistance worth $713 million for Ukraine and other countries in the region.

5:31 p.m. Russia has fired rockets at two towns in Ukraine's central Vinnytsia region on Monday, causing an unspecified number of deaths and injuries, regional Governor Serhiy Borzov reports. "Today, Vinnytsia region is once again under rocket fire (in) the towns of Zhmerynka and Kozyatyn. The enemy is attempting to hit critical infrastructure," Borzov says in a video released on the Telegram messaging app.

A Satellite Image Shows Armored Vehicles at the Northern End of a Military Convoy Moving South Through the Ukrainian Town of Velykyi Burluk, Ukraine on April 8. © Reuters

2:36 p.m. Russia has made minor advances in some areas since shifting its focus to fully occupying the Donbas, the U.K.'s Ministry of Defense tweets. "Without sufficient logistical and combat support enablers in place, Russia has yet to achieve a significant breakthrough," it said. Ukraine's defense of Mariupol has also exhausted many Russian units and reduced their combat effectiveness, British military intelligence said.

2:31 p.m. The Ukraine government has apologized over a video on Twitter that juxtaposed a picture of the late Japanese Emperor Hirohito to those of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini in describing Nazism and fascism. "We had no intention to offend the friendly people of Japan," the Ukraine account said in a tweet on Sunday. The original video shared on April 1 criticized Russia's invasion of Ukraine as "contemporary ruscism" and used pictures of the three with a description that said, "Fascism and Nazism

were defeated in 1945." Amid sharp reaction from Japanese Twitter users, Ukraine Ambassador to Japan Sergiy Korsunsky apologized Monday in a tweet, saying the creator of the video lacked an understanding of history.

1:19 p.m. The U.S. announces new military assistance for Ukraine and a renewed diplomatic push in the war-ravaged nation as President Joe Biden's secretary of state and Pentagon chief complete a secrecy-shrouded trip to Kyiv. Top envoy Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told Ukraine President Volodomyr Zelenskyy and his advisers that the U.S. would provide more than $300 million in military financing and have approved a $165 million sale of ammunition.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken Boards a Plane on April 23 at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. The Biden Administration Has Unveiled New U.S. Military Assistance for Ukraine. © AP

11:25 a.m. A large fire was reported early Monday at an oil storage facility in the Russian city of Bryansk, Russian news agencies report, citing the emergency services ministry. No

details were provided. Bryansk is about 380 km southwest of Moscow. The city is the administrative center of the Bryansk region, which borders Ukraine. Russian officials on Thursday said Ukrainian helicopters hit residential buildings and injured seven people in the region.

7:14 a.m. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy congratulates Emmanuel Macron on his reelection. "Congratulations to the President and a true friend @EmmanuelMacron on the election victory," Zelenskyy tweeted early Monday morning.

5:17 a.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin have arrived in Kyiv and are talking with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovych says late Sunday local time.

2:45 a.m. Russian forces have tried to storm the Ukrainian-held Azovstal steel plant in the besieged southeastern city of Mariupol, Ukrainian officials say, despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's comments last week that the complex did not need to be taken. Konstantin Ivaschenko, who has been designated mayor of Mariupol by Russia but is not recognized as such by Ukraine, denies any fighting in the city. Reuters cannot independently verify the Ukrainian or Russian accounts. Read more.

Tuesday, April 26

11:15 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tweets about his phone call with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. Kishida said Japan would send additional supplies of food and medicine.

Earlier, the Japanese government put forward a redrawn plan that skips India in transporting humanitarian aid supplies to Ukrainian refugees. The revision became necessary after India refused to let Japanese Self-Defense Forces aircraft land there.

10:30 p.m. In a sign of the war's far-reaching impact on business, BMW Group and Audi suspend shipments of cars by rail from Germany to China, the biggest market for both carmakers.

"Due to the current geopolitical situation, our train transport on the Silk Road and Trans-Siberian Railway have temporarily been switched to alternative routes or transportation modes to ensure planning and supply security," says a BMW spokeswoman. "Vehicles for China and Mongolia are now transported by ship from Bremerhaven." Read more.

6:25 p.m. Germany's defense minister says her country will facilitate the delivery of self-propelled armored anti-aircraft guns to Ukraine. Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht made the announcement at a U.S.-hosted meeting on arming Ukraine at the United States' Ramstein Air Base in Germany, according to the text of her remarks on Tuesday provided by her ministry.

5:36 p.m. Russia and Belarus will hold joint drills of their air forces and air defense forces in Belarus, Minsk's defense ministry says in a statement. The drills will take place from April 26 to 29, the ministry says.

With Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Still Ongoing, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin Delivers Opening Remarks at the Ukraine Defense Consultative Group Meeting at Ramstein Air Base in Germany on April 26. © Reuters

5:34 p.m. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin kicked off talks with more than 40 countries on Tuesday by expressing confidence that Ukraine can prevail against Russia in the 2-month-old conflict. "As we see this morning, nations from around the world stand united in our resolve to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia's imperial aggression," Austin said at a U.S.-hosted meeting in Germany. "Ukraine clearly believes that it can win, and so does everyone here."

People Walk Along a Street Near a Building Damaged in the Ukraine-Russia Conflict in the Southern Port City of Mariupol, Ukraine, on April 25. © Reuters

12:30 p.m. Several buildings are damaged in the village of Golovchino, in Russia's Belgorod Province, which came under fire from Ukraine on Tuesday morning, Vyacheslav Gladkov, the regional governor, said on the Telegram messaging app, without citing evidence. Hours earlier, Gladkov said at least two people had been hurt in an attack on another village, Zhuravlyovka. He did not specify whether the two attacks were artillery or mortar shelling, or

missile strikes

Under a Revised Plan, the Japanese Government Says SDF C2 Transport Planes Will Deliver Blankets and Other Humanitarian Aid, via the United Arab Emirates, to Ukrainian Refugees.

11:30 a.m. The Japanese government has given up an initial plan to load aid supplies for displaced Ukrainians in India after Tokyo said India refused to allow a Self-Defense Forces plane to land in the country. Under the revised plan, the government says SDF C2 transport planes will take blankets and other humanitarian aid supplies via the United Arab Emirates and deliver them to neighboring Poland and Romania, which host Ukrainian refugees. The start of the aid program, which was to begin in late April, will be delayed to early May. It will fly about one flight per week until the end of June.

10:21 a.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warned the West on Monday not to underestimate the elevated risk of nuclear conflict over Ukraine, and said he viewed NATO as being "in essence" engaged in a proxy war with Russia by supplying Kyiv with weaponry. "The risks now are

considerable," Lavrov said of the possibility of a nuclear war. "I would not want to elevate those risks artificially ... The danger is serious, real. And we must not underestimate it."

7:00 a.m. The U.S. State Department used an emergency declaration for the first time during the Biden administration to approve the potential sale of $165 million worth of ammunition to Ukraine to help the country defend itself against Russia's ongoing invasion, the Pentagon says. The package could include ammunition for howitzers, tanks and grenade launchers, such as 152 mm rounds for 2A36 Giatsint; 152 mm rounds for D-20 cannons.

2:30 a.m. Russia says it has destroyed infrastructure for rail lines that Moscow claims were used to supply foreign weapons to Ukrainian forces.

High-precision Russian missiles destroyed six Ukrainian facilities, Reuters reports, citing a statement by the Russian Ministry of Defense.

2:20 a.m. Describing Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a "direct threat" to Europe's security, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen says the war also holds implications for the Indo-Pacific region.

"For the Indo-Pacific region, it is as important as for Europe that borders are respected and that spheres of influence are rejected," the European Union leader says in her keynote address to open the seventh Raisina Dialogue, India's annual flagship conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics.

"Countries battered by two years of COVID pandemic must deal now with rising prices for grain, energy and fertilizers

as a direct result of [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's war of choice," she also says. Read more.

Wednesday, April 27

Group of 20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Met at the Jakarta Convention Center in February. © Reuters

11:21 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tweets that Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has invited him to attend the summit of Group of 20 major economies in the Southeast Asian country in November.

Zelenskyy did not confirm whether he would accept the invitation. Russia has said President Vladimir Putin plans to attend. Officials from Indonesia, the current G-20 chair, did not immediately respond to requests for confirmation.

10:20 p.m. The U.S. and Russia announce a prisoner swap that has freed a former U.S. Marine in an unexpected diplomatic breakthrough. Trevor Reed was released in exchange for Konstantin Yaroshenko, a Russian pilot sentenced to a lengthy term in the U.S. on cocaine-trafficking charges.

"Trevor, a former U.S. Marine, is free from Russian detention," President Joe Biden said in a statement. "I heard in the voices of Trevor's parents how much they've worried about his health and missed his presence. And I was delighted to be able to share with them the good news about Trevor's freedom."

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis Says Greece Will Offer Help to Bulgaria, Which Has Been Cut Off From Russian Gas Supplies. (Dimitris Papamitsos/Greek Prime Minister's Office/Handout via REUTERS)

6:31 p.m. Greece will offer help to Bulgaria, which had its gas supplies cut off by Russia, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis told his Bulgarian counterpart. The leaders discussed the matter by phone. "The prime minister said that Greece will help Bulgaria to deal with the new situation caused by the Russian decisions on energy," Mitsotakis' office said in a statement, without elaborating.

6:07 p.m. Russia expects its economy to contract by 8.8% in 2022 in its base case scenario, or by 12.4% under a more conservative scenario, an economy ministry document shows, giving apparent evidence that international sanctions are taking a toll. The conservative forecast is in line with that of former Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin, who said earlier this month the economy was on track to contract by more than 10%, which would be its biggest decline since 1994.

5:09 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says Kalibr missiles struck an arms depot in Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region housing weapons from the United States and European countries. The ministry said its air force destroyed 59 Ukrainian military targets overnight. It added that "hangars with a large batch of foreign weapons and ammunition supplied to Ukrainian troops by the United States and European countries" were destroyed. Russia's report could not be independently confirmed.

4:25 p.m. Russian energy giant Gazprom halted gas supplies to Bulgaria and Poland for failing to pay for gas in rubles, the Kremlin's toughest response yet to the crippling sanctions imposed by the West for the invasion of Ukraine. Poland and Bulgaria are the first countries to have their gas cut off by Europe's main supplier since the Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine that has killed thousands of people, displaced millions more and raised fears of a broader conflict.

9:28 a.m. Drone giant DJI Technology will temporarily suspend business in Russia and Ukraine, it says, making it the first major Chinese company to halt sales to Russia since the country invaded Ukraine in February.

Although Western firms have pulled out of Russia in protest, many Chinese companies have stayed there, taking a cue

from Beijing's stance of refraining from criticism of Moscow over the invasion.

9:07 a.m. Russian energy giant Gazprom will halt gas supplies to Poland and Bulgaria from Wednesday, a major escalation of Russia's broader dispute with the West over its invasion of Ukraine, the company says. Poland and Bulgaria would be the first countries to have their gas cut off by Europe's main supplier since Moscow started what it calls a military operation in Ukraine on Feb. 24. The move to cut off supplies also followed sanctions imposed by Warsaw against Russian individuals and companies.

8:42 a.m. Ukrainian authorities on Tuesday dismantled a huge Soviet-era monument in the center of Kyiv meant to symbolize friendship between Russia and Ukraine, according to the city's mayor. The 8-meter bronze statue depicted a Ukrainian and a Russian worker on a plinth, together holding aloft a Soviet order of friendship. The statue stood underneath the giant titanium People's Friendship Arch, erected in 1982 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Soviet Union.

"We now see what this "friendship" is: destruction of Ukrainian cities ... killing tens of thousands of peaceful people. I am convinced such a monument has an entirely different meaning now," Kyiv Mayor Vitaly Klitschko said.

5:35 a.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken says Japan will attend the NATO summit to be held in late June.

"One of the things we have been advancing is increasing NATO focus on working with partners that are not part of NATO, including what we call the "Asia-Pacific four," and that of course includes Japan," he says at a Senate Foreign

Relations Committee hearing, adding that the four Asia-Pacific nations will attend the NATO summit in Madrid.

"Japan has stood up in remarkable ways on the Ukraine crisis," he says.

3:00 a.m. International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi has visited the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, back under Ukrainian control after being occupied by Russian forces.

Radiation levels at the site of the 1986 nuclear disaster are "normal," AFP quotes Grossi as saying after an inspection with a team of experts.

The situation during the Russia occupation of the plant was "very, very dangerous," with radiational levels rising for a while, Grossi is quoted as telling reporters.

Tuesday marked the 36th anniversary of the disaster.

1:05 a.m. In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the share of Taiwan residents who do not believe the U.S. would send troops in response to a Chinese attack has doubled, a new poll shows. Read more.

Thursday, April 28

11:00 p.m. As Western energy groups pull out of Russia, Chinese oil driller CNOOC says the company has "no plan to exit from any particular region."

All of CNOOC's overseas projects are operating smoothly, and the company has felt no impact from the Russia-Ukraine war or any related sanctions, Chief Financial Officer Xie Weizhi tells an earnings conference.

Xie says CNOOC "neither has a plan nor has taken specific actions" regarding assets in Russia being departed by Western energy groups. Read more.

10:30 p.m. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Thursday is dominated by how to respond to Russia's aggression and the economic impact of its war on Ukraine. The two leaders discuss help for Ukraine and agree that Scholz's flight home on the government plane also will carry aid items from Japan to Ukraine.

Earlier, Scholz tells Japanese business leaders: "In the future, hydrogen will be an alternative to today's gas and coal. By promoting the development of hydrogen through Japan-Germany cooperation, we can bring about prosperity on a wide scale." Read more.

10:21 p.m. The U.S. accuses Moscow of planning to stage fake independence votes in captured areas of southern and eastern Ukraine to justify the Russian invasion.

10:18 p.m. Finland will not pay for Russian gas in rubles despite Russia's request for European countries to do so, says Tytti Tuppurainen, the Finnish minister in charge of European affairs.

5:52 p.m. A Russian court has fined social media network Twitter 3 million rubles ($41,000) for not removing banned content from its site, Interfax news agency reports. The fine was imposed after Twitter failed to delete content banned in Russia, including posts with instructions on how to make Molotov cocktails, Interfax said, citing the court. Earlier, Interfax reported that Russia fined U.S. internet giant Google the same amount for refusing to remove banned content from video-sharing site YouTube.

5:00 p.m. British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace says it would be legitimate for Ukrainian forces to target Russian logistics, but they were unlikely to use British weapons. Moscow has accused London of provoking Ukraine to strike targets in Russia, saying there would be an immediate "proportional response" if it continued. "If Ukraine did choose to target logistics infrastructure for the Russian army, that would be legitimate under international law," Wallace told BBC TV. He said any long-range weapons were unlikely to come from Britain however, because Ukrainian forces tend to use mobile launchers, while the British Army would deliver them from the air or sea.

4:19 p.m. Japan Tobacco says it is considering selling off its Russian operations, JT International Russia, in response to the country's invasion of Ukraine. The company controls nearly 40% of the Russian cigarette market, but stated that it is "continuing to evaluate various options for its Russia business, including a potential transfer of ownership."

12:52 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin warns of "lightning-fast" retaliation if countries intervene in Ukraine. Russia has told the United States to stop sending arms to

Ukraine, saying large Western deliveries of weapons are inflaming the conflict. Addressing lawmakers in St. Petersburg on Wednesday, Putin said, "If someone intends to intervene in the ongoing events from the outside, and create strategic threats for Russia that are unacceptable to us, they should know that our retaliatory strikes will be lightning-fast," according to video of his address supplied by Russian media. "We have all the tools for this, things no one else can boast of having now. And we will not boast -- we will use them if necessary. And I want everyone to know that."

12:36 p.m. In the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson, which has been occupied by Russian forces since early in the war, a series of explosions boomed near the television tower late Wednesday and at least temporarily knocked Russian channels off the air, Ukrainian and Russian news organizations report. The Russian state news agency RIA Novosti said missiles and rockets were fired at the city from the direction of the Ukrainian forces to the northwest. Russian channels began broadcasting from Kherson last week.

U.S. President Joe Biden Will Visit South Korea and Japan From May 20 to 24 To Strengthen Ties With Washington's Two Main Asian Allies. © Reuters

11:20 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden will visit South Korea and Japan from May 20 to 24 to advance a "free and open Indo-Pacific" and strengthen ties with the two Asian allies, the White House says. It will be his first trip to the region since taking office last year. Through a series of meetings, including the Quad summit of the United States, Japan, Australia and India, Biden is likely to affirm with Indo-Pacific nations their responses to Russia's war in Ukraine, China's assertiveness in the region and North Korea's nuclear and missile ambitions.

10:00 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden will deliver remarks on Thursday morning "on support for Ukrainians defending their country and their freedom against Russia's brutal war," the White House says.

6:29 a.m. Canadian lawmakers vote unanimously to call Russia's attacks in Ukraine "genocide," with members of

parliament agreeing that there is "ample evidence of systemic and massive war crimes against humanity" being committed by Moscow.

4:38 a.m. The European Commission proposes a one-year suspension of import duties on all Ukrainian goods not covered by an existing free trade deal to help the country's economy during the war with Russia. The measures apply in particular to fruit and vegetables, subject to minimum price requirements, agricultural products facing quotas and certain industrial goods.

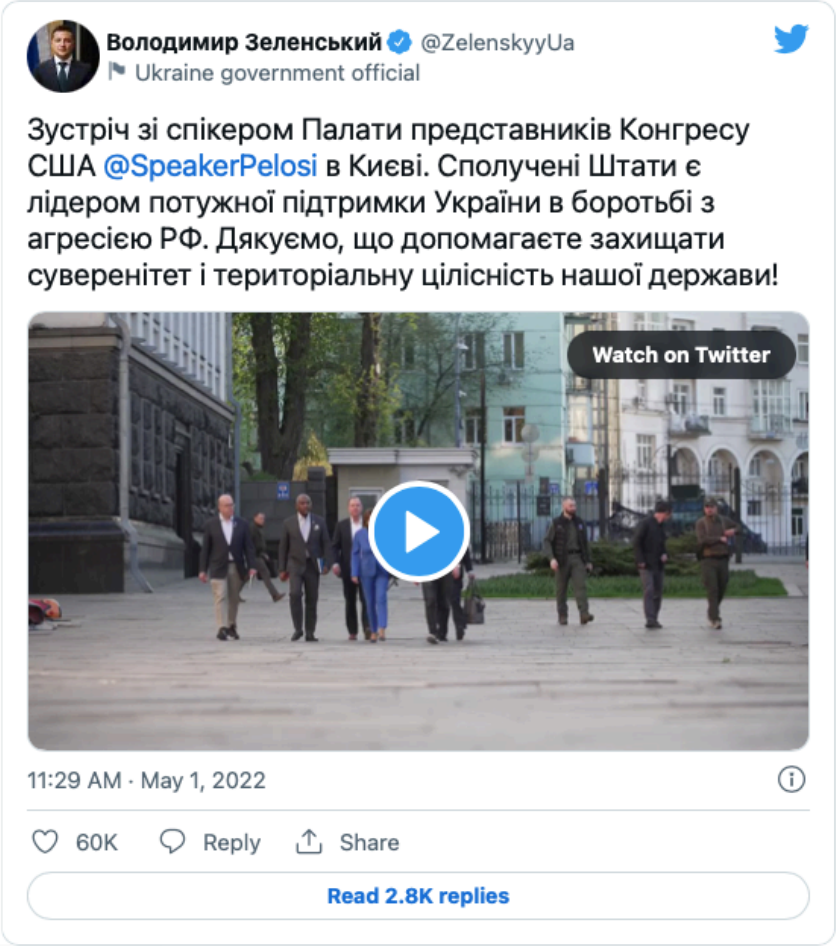
The European Union also would exempt Ukraine from safeguard measures that limit steel imports, and lift anti-dumping tariffs the EU currently imposes on Ukrainian steel tubes, hot-rolled flat steel products and ironing boards. The proposal needs to be agreed on by the European Parliament and EU governments to come into force.

12:12 a.m. Exxon Mobil's Russian unit Exxon Neftegas declares force majeure for its Sakhalin-1 operations, Reuters reports. The Sakhalin-1 project produces oil off the coast of Russia's Far East, exporting crude mostly to South Korea but also to Japan and other countries.

Project stakeholders including Exxon and India's Oil and Natural Gas are having difficulty chartering tankers to ship oil out of a region that generally needs ice vessels to navigate the journey, as shippers fear reputation risk, Reuters reports.

Friday, April 29

10:00 p.m.
Russia has not decided whether



President Vladimir Putin will attend the Group of 20 summit in Indonesia in person or virtually, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov says.

Indonesia Has Invited Russian President Vladimir Putin to the November G-20 Summit in Bali, Despite Protests From Some Western Countries. © Reuters

9:00 p.m. Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo says Russian President Vladimir Putin accepted his invitation to the Group of 20 summit.

Widodo says he emphasized the importance of ending the war immediately in a phone conversation with the Russian leader. "I also emphasize that a peaceful solution can continue to be put forward, and Indonesia is ready to contribute to the peace effort," he says.

The Indonesian leader also says he turned down a request for arms from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in a separate phone call, and urged both Zelenskyy and Putin to end the war in Ukraine.

Indonesia, the current chair of the Group of 20 major economies, has invited both Zelenskyy and Putin to the November leaders summit in Bali, despite pressure from some Western countries to exclude the latter. Ukraine is not

a member of the G-20, but chairs of the group have previously invited guest countries.

8:07 p.m. The Bank of Russia cuts its key interest rate by 300 basis points for the second time this month, to 14%, looking to stimulate more lending in the economy amid high inflation, surprising analysts who had forecast a smaller reduction.

The Russian ruble strengthens to 74.0525 against the euro, the highest in more than two years, and reaches 70.3075 to the dollar in Moscow trade before paring some gains, supported by capital controls.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy shake Hands at a Joint News Conference in Kyiv on April 28. © Reuters

7:00 a.m. Efforts to create a humanitarian corridor for civilians trapped in a Mariupol steel plant continue after United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres meets with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, with Guterres calling the situation in the besieged city an "apocalypse."

"I can only tell you we are doing everything we can to make it happen," Guterres tells reporters after the meeting. "I am not going to enter into any comments that would undermine that possibility, because my first and only priority is the people that suffer and the people that must be rescued."

Zelenskyy later says five Russian missiles flew into Kyiv "immediately after the end" of his talks with the U.N. chief.

2:40 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden asks Congress for $33 billion to support Ukraine -- a dramatic escalation of American funding for the war with Russia -- and for new tools to siphon assets from Russian oligarchs.

1:00 a.m. China's biggest oil refiner, Sinopec Group, has been unloading excess liquefied natural gas to European buyers, the company says, in transactions that appear to run counter to China's objections to Russian sanctions.

Sinopec's Hong Kong-listed subsidiary confirms during a first quarter earnings call that it is reselling part of its LNG stockpile on the "international market" in commenting on sales to Europe.

"These are pure market transactions," a Sinopec representative says. "We are trading LNG on a global scale based on commercialization and diversification principles."

Saturday, April 30

11:57 p.m. The Ukrainian military says a Russian missile strike on Odesa airport has damaged the runway and it can no longer be used.

11:25 p.m. Ukraine and Russia carry out a prisoner exchange, with seven soldiers and seven civilians coming home to Ukraine, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk says. One of the soldiers was a woman who is five months' pregnant, she adds.

9:00 p.m. French President Emmanuel Macron says France will step up military and humanitarian support to Ukraine during a phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. According to Reuters, Macron reiterates his "strong concern" over Russia's bombing of Ukrainian cities and the "unbearable situation" in the southeastern port city of Mariupol.

3:09 p.m. Russian forces have stolen "several hundred thousand tons" of grain in the areas of Ukraine they occupy, Ukraine's deputy agriculture minister says. Speaking to Ukrainian national TV, Taras Vysotskiy expressed concern that most of what he said was 1.5 million tons of grain stored in occupied territory could also be stolen by Russian forces. Ukraine's foreign ministry on Thursday accused Russia of stealing grain in territory it has occupied, an act it said increased the threat to global food security.

2:20 a.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is on a five-nation tour framed as "protecting peace" as Russia's war against Ukraine divides the Group of 20.

On his first stop, in Indonesia, Kishida stood beside Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo on Friday to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"Unilateral changes to the status quo by force are unacceptable, and we affirmed that we will urge a peaceful resolution to conflict based on international law," Kishida

said at a joint news conference in Jakarta. He is also visiting Vietnam, Thailand, Italy and the U.K. before returning to Japan next Friday. Read more.

1:57 a.m. Russia appears close to averting an expected debt default after claiming it made two overdue dollar-bond payments Friday totaling $649 million, sent in dollars.

After U.S. authorities this month stopped American banks from processing such payments, Russia said it would pay in rubles, which is not permitted by the terms of the bonds. It may now be taking a different approach. Russia could dodge default if investors get their dollars before a 30-day grace period that expires May 4.

1:30 a.m. Japan's foreign minister calls on Kazakhstan to side with members of the international community taking a stand against Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Yoshimasa Hayashi made the request at a meeting with Kazakh counterpart Mukhtar Tileuberdi in Nur-Sultan, following Kazakhstan's abstention last month from the U.N. General Assembly resolution condemning Russia.

Sunday, May 1

11:03 p.m. A "safe passage operation" for civilians from the Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol is underway, a U.N. spokesperson confirms. The operation in the besieged Ukrainian city is being carried out in coordination with the

International Committee of the Red Cross, Russia and Ukraine, having begun on Friday.

5:56 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says it has struck at weapons supplied to Ukraine by the United States and European countries and destroys a runway at a military airfield near the Ukrainian city of Odesa. The ministry says it uses high-precision Onyx missiles to strike the airfield, after Ukraine accuses Russia of knocking out a newly-constructed runway at the main airport of Odesa. Odesa regional governor Maksym Marchenko says Russia had used a Bastion missile, launched from Crimea.

5:30 p.m. A Ukrainian fighter inside a shelter in the city's bombed out Azovstal steel works says that 20 women and children had made it out of the sprawling plant. "We are getting civilians out of the rubble with ropes -- it's the elderly, women and children," says the fighter, Sviatoslav Palamar. Palamar says Russia and Ukraine were respecting a local cease-fire and he hoped the evacuated civilians would be taken to the city of Zaporizhzhia to the northwest.

Two groups of civilians left the residential area around the Azovstal steel works in the southern Ukrainian city of Mariupol on Saturday, Russian news agencies cites the defense ministry as saying on Sunday. The ministry says a total of 46 civilians had left the area and were provided with food and shelter, RIA and TASS report.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Welcomes U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in Kyiv, Ukraine on April 30. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service/Handout via Reuters)

4:20 p.m. U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi makes an unannounced visit to Kyiv. Second in the line of succession to the president, Pelosi is the highest-ranking

U.S. official to meet with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy since the start of the war. Zelenskyy releases a video of the visit on Twitter.

7:55 a.m. Hollywood actress and U.N. humanitarian Angelina Jolie makes a surprise visit to the western Ukrainian city of Lviv.

On Telegram, Lviv Gov. Maksym Kozytskyy says Jolie came to speak with displaced people who have found refuge in Lviv, including children undergoing treatment for injuries sustained in the missile strike on the Kramatorsk railway station in early April.

Jolie has been a UNHCR Special Envoy for Refugees since 2011.

Actress and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie Poses for Photo With Children in Lviv, Ukraine on April 30. © AP

1:07 a.m. Peace talks seem to be at a standstill as Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says lifting Russia sanctions is part of negotiations with Ukraine, a claim denied by

senior Ukrainian negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak. "The talks' agenda ... includes, among other things, the issues of denazification, the recognition of new geopolitical realities, the lifting of sanctions, the status of the Russian language," Lavrov says in comments to China's official Xinhua News Agency published on the Russian Foreign Ministry's website.

But Podolyak is dismissive of those comments, saying Lavrov had not attended a single negotiating round, and Ukraine did not need lessons in "denazification" or use of the Russian language from those who had attacked and occupied Ukrainian towns and cities, according to Reuters.

Monday, May 2

11:15 p.m. Hungary has moved its embassy in Ukraine back to Kyiv from Lviv as the capital's security situation continues to improve, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto says.

9:07 p.m. Efforts to evacuate more civilians from the devastated Ukrainian port city of Mariupol run into delays, and hundreds of people remain trapped in the Azovstal steel works, the last stronghold of resistance to the Russian siege. The cause of the holdup is unclear, though a city official says Russian forces resumed shelling the plant on Sunday after a convoy of buses had left.

5:30 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says that the Russian military has shot down a Ukrainian MiG-29 fighter jet near Sloviansk in eastern Ukraine. The ministry says in a briefing it has hit 38 military targets in Ukraine, including ammunition depots and control centers.

4:37 p.m. A Ukrainian Bayraktar drone destroyed two Russian Raptor-class patrol ships in the Black Sea on Monday, Ukraine's military chief says. "Two Russian Raptor-class boats were destroyed at dawn today near Zmiinyi (Snake) Island," Chief of General Staff Valeriy Zaluzhniy wrote on the Telegram messaging app. There was no immediate reaction from Moscow to the claim.

Ukraine Says It Has Used a Bayraktar Drone To Destroy Two Russian Raptor-Class Patrol Ships in the Black Sea on Monday. © Reuters

4:03 p.m. Finland will decide to apply for NATO membership on May 12, Finnish newspaper Iltalehti reported late on Sunday, citing anonymous government sources. The decision to join will come in two steps on that day, with Finnish President Sauli Niinisto first announcing his approval for the Nordic neighbor of Russia to join the Western defense alliance, followed by parliamentary groups giving their approval for the application, the paper reported. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has pushed Finland and Sweden to the verge of applying for NATO membership.

3:45 p.m. Ukraine could lose tens of millions of tons of grain due to Russia's blockade of its Black Sea ports, triggering a food crisis that would affect Europe, Asia and Africa, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says. "Russia does not let ships come in or go out. It is controlling the Black Sea," Zelenskyy told the Australian news program 60 Minutes. "Russia wants to completely block our country's

economy." Ukraine is a major exporter of grain and other food products and also of metals.

3:04 p.m. Ukraine will be able to go on the offensive against Russia between late May and mid-June, thanks to weapons supplied by the U.S. and European countries, Oleksiy Arestovich, an adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in an online interview with Nikkei Asia. His remark suggests an acceleration in the pace of the war, as experts predict Russia will stage all-out attacks before its May 9 Victory Day, which commemorates the Soviet Union's beating back Nazi Germany in World War II.

1:26 p.m. Russia's unprovoked military aggression against Ukraine has come as a dire security warning for many countries. The horrifying destruction and huge casualties Ukraine has suffered have prompted political leaders around the world to start rethinking their security policies and strategies. Japan cannot remain insulated from the seismic shift triggered by the war in Ukraine. Nikkei commentator Hiroyuki Akita describes how the war underscores the urgency of buttressing the nation's defense system and alliances. Read more.

6:30 a.m. The upcoming anniversary of Russia's liberation at the end of World War II will have no bearing on Moscow's military operations in Ukraine, the country's foreign minister said on Italian television. "Our soldiers won't base their actions on a specific date," Sergey Lavrov said when asked whether the May 9 anniversary would mark a turning point in the conflict. "We'll commemorate our victory in a solemn manner but the timing and speed of what is happening in Ukraine will hinge on the need to minimize risks for civilians and Russian soldiers," he added.

6:00 a.m. About 70% of Asia's biggest companies lost value in the first two months of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with investors spooked by the economic fallout from the war and the impact of tough new COVID-19 lockdowns in manufacturing powerhouse China.

The market capitalization of prominent companies such as Tencent Holdings, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. and Samsung Electronics dropped as high raw material costs and supply chain concerns weigh on manufacturers. But the value of energy and commodity companies in India, Thailand and Malaysia rose as their output commands higher prices. Read more.

5:55 a.m. Germany expects to completely wean itself off Russian crude oil imports by late summer, The Associated Press reports a German minister as saying.

Europe's largest economy has cut its share of Russian energy imports to 12% for oil, 8% for coal and 35% for natural gas, according to Robert Habeck, who heads Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. Berlin has faced strong calls to reduce its reliance on Russian fossil fuels over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Civilians Who Left the Area Near the Azovstal Steel Plant in Mariupol Look out of a Bus Near Temporary Accommodations in Ukraine on May 1. © Reuters

Tuesday, May 3

9:55 p.m. Russian troops shell the Azovstal steel plant in Ukraine's southern port city of Mariupol, confirming earlier reports of strikes on the encircled plant, where the mayor says over 200 civilians remain trapped.

Russian sources allege the country's forces began to destroy Ukrainian firing positions established after the defenders "took advantage" of a U.N.-brokered cease-fire that let several groups of civilians escape the plant. A Mariupol police official has told public broadcaster Suspine that Russia is trying to seize the sprawling plant, the last pocket of Mariupol still held by Ukrainian forces.

Traumatized Residents Were Evacuated From a Village Near Kharkiv, Ukraine's Second Largest City, After It Was Retaken by Ukrainian Forces on May 2. © Reuters

6:54 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree on retaliatory economic sanctions in response to the "unfriendly actions of certain foreign states and international organizations," the Kremlin says. According to the decree, Russia will forbid the export of products and raw materials to people and entities that it has sanctioned. The decree also prohibits transactions with foreign individuals and companies hit by Russia's retaliatory sanctions and permits Russian counterparties not to fulfill obligations toward them.

6:00 p.m. Russia has struck a military airfield near Ukraine's southwestern city of Odesa with missiles, destroying drones, missiles and ammunition supplied to Ukraine by the United States and its European allies, the defense ministry says. "High-precision Onyx missiles struck a logistics center at a military airfield in the Odesa region through which foreign weapons were being delivered," the

defense ministry says. "Hangars containing unmanned Bayraktar TB2 drones, as well as missiles and ammunition from the U.S. and European countries, were destroyed."

4:20 p.m. Slovakia will seek an exemption from any embargo on Russian oil decided by the European Union in its next set of sanctions against Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine, Slovakia's economy ministry says.

3:07 p.m. A Fijian court rules that the U.S. can seize a Russian-owned superyacht 21 days after the luxury vessel Amadea arrived in the Pacific island nation and was detained by police. U.S. authorities assert that the Amadea is ultimately owned by Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov, who has been sanctioned by the U.S. and the European Union. Fiji's High Court will grant an order to register a U.S. seizure warrant, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation reports.

3:00 p.m. Russian forces shell Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city, and have devastated several towns in eastern Ukraine. Ukraine's general staff says its forces were defending the approach to Kharkiv from Izyum, a town on the Donets River, some 120 km (75 miles) to the southeast, as the enemy left a trail of destruction around Luhansk.

Ukraine's military says Russian forces are trying to take the front line Luhansk town of Rubizhne and prepare an assault on nearby Sievierodonetsk. The heaviest clashes were taking place around Popasna to the south. Shelling has been so intense it has not possible to collect bodies, says Serhiy Gaidai, the regional governor.

"I don't even want to speak about what's happening with the people living in Popasna, Rubizhne and Novotoshkivske

right now," Gaidai says. "These cities simply don't exist anymore. They have completely destroyed them."

1:00 a.m. The European Union will likely propose ending purchases of Russian crude oil by the 27-country bloc before the end of 2022, Nikkei and other media report.

The proposal is expected to be announced Tuesday. This follows the EU's coal import ban agreed on in April.

The oil embargo will be the centerpiece of a sixth package of EU sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine.

Wednesday, May 4

6:05 p.m. Russia's foreign ministry announces sanctions against 63 Japanese officials, journalists and professors for engaging in what it called "unacceptable rhetoric" against Moscow. The list includes Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi, among other officials.

Firefighters at a Lviv Power Substation Hit by a Missile Strike on Tuesday, as Russia's Attack on Ukraine Continues. © Reuters

5:57 p.m. A Russian submarine in Black sea had fired two Kalibr cruise missiles at targets in Ukraine, Russia's defense ministry says. "The crew of the Black Sea Fleet submarine launched two Kalibr cruise missiles from the Black Sea at designated ground targets in the territory of Ukraine," it says.

5:50 p.m. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu says the military would consider NATO transport carrying weapons in Ukraine as targets to be destroyed, according to RIA news agency. Shoigu also says that Ukrainian fighters holed up in the sprawling Azovstal plant in Mariupol have been kept under secure blockade after President Vladimir Putin ordered that they be hermetically sealed off.

5:00 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says it has disabled six railway stations in Ukraine used to supply Ukrainian forces with Western-made weapons in the country's east. The ministry says it has bombed railway stations' power supplies using high-precision air and sea-based weapons. It did not say which Western-made weapons were supplied to Ukrainian forces via those stations.

3:50 p.m. The European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen is proposing a phased oil embargo on Russia, as well as sanctions on its top bank, Sberbank, and to ban Russian broadcasters from European airwaves, in its toughest measures yet to punish Moscow for invading Ukraine. The plan, if agreed by EU governments, would be a watershed for the world's largest trading bloc, which is dependent on Russian energy and must find alternative supplies.

"Putin must pay a price, a high price, for his brutal aggression," von der Leyen tells the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

1:53 p.m. Russia has deployed 22 battalion tactical groups near Ukraine's eastern city of Izium in an effort to advance along the northern axis of the Donbas region, Britain said on Wednesday. In an update on Twitter, British military intelligence said it was highly likely that Russia intended to move beyond Izium to capture the cities of Kramatorsk and Severodonetsk.

A Senior U.S. Official Confirms Moscow Has Made Payments Without Using Reserves Frozen in the U.S. © Reuters

5:00 a.m. Russia appears to have avoided a default as overdue payments on two sovereign Eurobonds were sent to creditors, four sources tell Reuters. A source familiar with the payment process and speaking on condition of anonymity on Tuesday said the funds had been transferred to some bondholders the day before. Two creditors holding the bonds confirmed the money had shown up in their accounts. A senior U.S. official confirmed on Monday that Moscow had made the payment without using reserves frozen in the United States, adding that the exact origin of the funds was unclear.

5:34 a.m. Russian attacks in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region kill 21 civilians and injure 27, regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko says in an online post. Kyrylenko says the death toll, from the previous day, is the region's highest since an assault last month on a railway station in the town of Kramatorsk that killed more than 50.

12:30 a.m. Just over 100 people have been evacuated from the besieged Azovstal steel plant, the United Nations says, even as reports of attacks by Russian forces continue.

A U.N. official says 101 people have been ferried to safety, mostly to Zaporizhzhia in southern Ukraine. Reuters quotes the head of the Red Cross in Ukraine as saying an unknown number of civilians remain trapped in the plant in Mariupol.

The Azov Battalion, a Ukrainian paramilitary group, says in a social media posting that two women were killed Tuesday in a Russian attack on the plant.

Thursday, May 5

9:26 p.m. Authorities in Fiji have seized a $300 million yacht owned by Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov at Washington's request, the U.S. Justice Department says. Kerimov was sanctioned by the U.S. and European Union.

9:02 p.m. Finland is prepared for the possibility of Russia cutting off its gas deliveries, Minister of European Affairs Tytti Tuppurainen tells Reuters, ahead of the Nordic country's decision on whether to join NATO. Helsinki said on April 28 it would not abide by Moscow's demand for gas payments to be made in rubles.

Finland is maintaining alternative energy sources, Tuppurainen says, and will lease a floating LNG terminal with Estonia. Roughly 60%-70% of the gas used in Finland originates from Russia. But it accounted for little more than 5% of the country's total energy consumption last year, Statistics Finland's preliminary data shows.

"It Will Take Time Simply To Lift People Out of Basements [and] Underground Shelters," Volodymyr Zelenskyy Says. "We Cannot Use Heavy Equipment. ... It all Has To Be Done by Hand." © Reuters

8:06 p.m. Ukraine is unlikely to launch a counteroffensive in its war with Russia before mid-June, when it hopes to have received more weapons from its allies, an adviser to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says.

Political adviser Oleksiy Arestovych also says he does not expect Russia's offensive in Ukraine to produce any "significant results" by May 9, when Russia will celebrate its victory over Nazi Germany in World War II.

4:49 p.m. Russia says its artillery struck multiple Ukrainian positions and strongholds overnight, killing 600 fighters. The defense ministry also says its missiles destroyed aviation equipment at the Kanatovo airfield in Ukraine's central Kirovohrad region and a large ammunition depot in the southern city of Mykolaiv.

Two villages in Russia's Belgorod region bordering Ukraine have been shelled by Ukraine, Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov says, adding that there were no civilian casualties.

1:39 p.m. Oil prices extend gains as a European Union proposal for new sanctions against Russia, including an embargo on crude in six months, offset concerns over slowing Chinese demand. Brent crude futures had climbed 60 cents, or 0.5%, to $110.74 a barrel by 0630 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 40 cents, or 0.4%, to $108.21 a barrel. Both benchmarks jumped more than $1 a barrel earlier in the volatile session after gaining more than $5 a barrel on Wednesday.

9:05 a.m. Women and children remain trapped inside Ukraine's besieged city of Mariupol, and a prolonged cease-fire is needed to ensure their evacuation as Russia presses

its assault, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says. "It will take time simply to lift people out of those basements, out of those underground shelters," he said. "In the present conditions, we cannot use heavy equipment to clear the rubble away. It all has to be done by hand."

6:49 a.m. Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi and American counterpart Lloyd Austin have agreed to maintain U.S. nuclear deterrence and align their nations' security strategies in light of Russia's attack on Ukraine. Russia's baseless and "reckless invasion of Ukraine is an affront to the rules-based international order," Austin said at the start of a 75-minute meeting in Washington. Kishi said the war means Japan can no longer separate the security of the Indo-Pacific from that of Europe.

2:55 a.m. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warns that global food security cannot be solved without restoring Ukraine's agricultural production and Russia's food and fertilizer output. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has roiled financial markets, sending commodity prices higher and affecting logistics. "Our analysis indicates that the war in Ukraine is only making things worse, setting in motion a three-dimensional crisis that is devastating global food, energy and financial systems for developing countries," Guterres told reporters in Abuja, Nigeria's capital.

Friday, May 6

Components of an SSC-8/9M729 Cruise Missile System Are Displayed During a News Briefing Organized by the Russian Defense and Foreign Ministries, Near Moscow, in 2019. © Reuters

6:00 p.m. Russia will not use nuclear weapons in Ukraine, foreign ministry spokesman Alexei Zaitsev says, according to Reuters. Zaitsev told reporters the use of nuclear weapons by Russia -- a risk that Western officials have publicly discussed -- was not applicable to what Moscow calls its special military operation in Ukraine. CIA Director William Burns said on April 14 that given the setbacks Russia had suffered in Ukraine, "none of us can take lightly the threat posed by a potential resort to tactical nuclear weapons or low-yield nuclear weapons."

5:30 p.m. Germany will deliver seven self-propelled howitzers to Ukraine, on top of five such artillery systems the Dutch government has already pledged, German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht says. Germany last week reversed a long-held policy of not sending heavy weapons to war zones, following pressure from at home and abroad for it to help Ukraine fend off Russia's attacks. The

weapons, which are expected to come from the Bundeswehr armed forces, are to be delivered as soon as they emerge from maintenance over the next weeks.

3:20 p.m. Hungary cannot support the European Union's new sanctions package against Russia in its present form, including an embargo on Russian crude oil imports, Prime Minister Viktor Orban tells state radio. Orban said the European Commission's current proposal would amount to an "atomic bomb" dropped on the Hungarian economy, adding that Hungary is ready to negotiate if it sees a new proposal that would meet Hungarian interests.

12:30 p.m. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged the world to unite and end the war in Ukraine, calling it senseless, ruthless and "limitless in its potential for global harm." The top U.N. human rights official said even a one-day cease-fire would prevent dozens of civilian deaths and injuries and allow several thousand people to flee Russian attacks.

The Moskva, in the Ukrainian Black Sea Port of Sevastopol, in 2013. The U.S. Was Not Aware That Ukraine Planned To Strike the Moskva, an American Official Says. © Reuters

11:05 a.m. The U.S. says it shared intelligence with Ukraine about the location of the Russian missile cruiser Moskva prior to the strike that sank the warship, The Associated Press reports. An American official said that Ukraine alone decided to target and sink the flagship of Russia's Black Sea Fleet using its own anti-ship missiles. But given Russia's attacks on the Ukrainian coastline from the sea, the U.S. has provided "a range of intelligence" that includes locations of those ships, said the official.

9:23 a.m. The Pentagon says the majority of Russian forces that had been around the port city of Mariupol have left and headed north, leaving roughly the equivalent of two battalion tactical groups, or about 2,000 troops. Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said that even as Russian airstrikes continue to bombard Mariupol, Moscow's forces are still making only "plodding" and incremental progress as the main fight presses on in the eastern Donbas region.

Heavy Fighting Rages in the Metallurgical Combine Azovstal in Mariupol, in Territory Under the Government of the Donetsk People's Republic, May 5, 2022. © AP

2:30 a.m. Ukraine has large enough grain stocks in territory it still controls to feed the population in these areas

and enough fuel to meet farmers' daily needs, deputy agriculture minister Taras Vysotskiy says. Ukraine said last month that Russian forces had stolen "several hundred thousand tons" of grain in the areas of Ukraine they have occupied since the invasion began on Feb. 24 and this could affect the food security of local populations. The Kremlin has denied the allegation.

1:12 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin told Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett in a phone call that Russia was still ready to provide safe passage for civilians from the besieged Azovstal steelworks in the Ukrainian port of Mariupol, the Kremlin says. It said Putin told Bennett in a "thorough exchange of views on the situation in Ukraine" that Kyiv should order Ukrainian fighters holed up in the vast Azovstal plant to put down their weapons.

Saturday, May 7

11:45 p.m. Jill Biden hears stories from Ukrainian women and children who fled the war and found safe haven across the border in Romania, and the American first lady praises the Romanian government and relief organizations for the range of humanitarian aid they are providing to refugees. "We stand with you," Biden tells mothers at a Romanian public school hosting refugee students in Bucharest.

8:43 p.m. Six missiles hit the southern port city of Odesa, the spokeswoman for Ukraine's southern military command says. Four rockets strike a furniture factory in a residential area, while the other two strike an already damaged runway strip. The number of casualties is unclear.

A T-90M Tank Participates in a Military Parade on Victory Day, May 9, 2021, Which Marked the 76th Anniversary of the Victory Over Nazi Germany in World War II, in Red Square, Moscow. © Reuters

3:10 p.m. The conflict in Ukraine is taking a heavy toll on some of Russia's most capable units and most advanced

capabilities, the British defense ministry tweets in a regular bulletin. At least one T-90M, Russia's most advanced tank, has been destroyed in the fighting, the ministry said. Approximately 100 T-90M tanks are in service among Russia's best equipped units, including those fighting in Ukraine, it said.

12:00 p.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is considering attending the Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual Asian security conference to be held in Singapore in June, Nikkei has learned. Kishida plans to call for countries to cooperate in dealing with Russia, which recently invaded Ukraine, and China, which is strengthening its maritime expansion in the East and South China Seas.

8:40 a.m. The U.K. government says it will give Ukraine 287 mobile generators in addition to 569 generators it donated earlier. The new generators, which are enough to power nearly 8,000 homes, will be used for hospitals, shelters and other essential services in the face of ongoing destruction in eastern Ukraine, it says. The government has also relaxed rules on support for overseas fossil fuels to boost supply of vital energy to Ukraine.

U.S. Marine Corps M777 Towed 155mm Howitzers Are Readied for Transport to Europe, for Delivery to Ukrainian Forces, at March Air Reserve Base, California, on April 22. (U.S. Marine Corps Handout via Reuters)

7:00 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden signs a new $150 million weapons package for Ukraine, providing additional artillery munitions, radars and other equipment in the latest in a series of transfers to help Kyiv repel Russia's invasion. The new package will be worth $150 million and include 25,000 155mm artillery rounds, counterartillery radar, jamming equipment, field equipment and spare parts, a U.S. official said. The U.S. has rushed $3.4 billion worth of armaments to Ukraine since Russia invaded on Feb. 24, including howitzers, anti-aircraft Stinger missile systems, anti-tank Javelin missiles, ammunition and recently-disclosed Ghost drones.

2:29 a.m. Evacuations of civilians trapped in a bombed-out steelworks in Mariupol tentatively resumed late Friday, hours after Russia was accused of violating a truce intended to allow them to depart after weeks under siege.

Two buses carrying 25 civilians, including children, arrived at the staging post of Bezimenne, around 30 km east of the plant. Russian news agency Tass reports a third bus, carrying 23 civilian evacuees, left the Azovstal steel complex. Mariupol's mayor has estimated 200 people remained trapped at the plant with little food or water.

Sunday, May 8

11:14 p.m. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made an unannounced visit to the Ukrainian town of Irpin, which had been temporary held by Russian troops, the town's mayor said on Telegram. "I've just had an honor to meet with the Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau, who came to Irpin to see with his own eyes all the horror which Russian occupiers have caused to our town," Oleksandr Markushyn said on his Telegram channel.

10:54 p.m. U.S. first lady Jill Biden made an unannounced visit to western Ukraine, holding a surprise Mother's Day meeting with the nation's first lady, Olena Zelenska. "I wanted to come on Mother's Day," Biden told Zelenska. "I thought it was important to show the Ukrainian people that this war has to stop and this war has been brutal and that the people of the United States stand with the people of Ukraine."

U.S. First Lady Jill Biden Greets Olena Zelenskyy, Spouse of Ukrainian's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Outside of School 6, a Public School That Has Taken in Displaced Students in Uzhhorod, Ukraine, May 8. © AP

10:30 p.m. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin visited Mariupol, the country's most senior government official yet to set foot in the Ukrainian southern port city after weeks of Russian bombardment. Khusnullin, who in the Russian government is in charge of construction and urban development, said on Telegram he had visited Mariupol and eastern Ukrainian town of Volnovakha among other territories "liberated" by Russian forces. "Restoration of peaceful life begins in the regions. There's a lot of work to be done. We will help, in particular ... with providing humanitarian aid," he wrote in a Telegram post.

4:51 p.m. Russia's defense ministry said it had destroyed a Ukrainian corvette warship near Odesa by a missile strike overnight. The ministry also said its air defenses had shot down two Ukrainian SU-24 bombers and a helicopter over the Snake island in the Black Sea.

3:00 p.m. Two people have been killed in the Russian bombing of a school in the Ukrainian village of Bilohorivka and the 60 who remain under the debris are feared dead, Serhiy Gaidai, governor of the Luhansk region, said. Gaidai said Russia dropped a bomb on Saturday afternoon on the school where about 90 people were sheltering, causing a fire that engulfed the building. Thirty people have been rescued.

6:30 a.m. Britain will provide a further 1.3 billion pounds ($1.60 billion) in military support and aid to Ukraine, the country says, making the pledge ahead of a planned video call on Sunday by Group of Seven leaders with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The new pledge almost doubles Britain's previous spending commitments on Ukraine and the government says this is the highest rate of spending on a conflict since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, although it did not give details of this calculation.

5:15 a.m. In a late night address, President Zelenskyy confirms a rescue mission at the Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol, saying more than 300 civilians had been rescued at the plant, which has been pounded by Russian forces for several weeks. He says authorities will now focus on evacuating the wounded and medics as well as working on humanitarian corridors for all residents of Mariupol and surrounding settlements.

1:38 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin believes doubling down on the conflict will improve his outcome in the war, says CIA director William Burns.

"He's in a frame of mind in which he doesn't believe he can afford to lose," said Burns, who was speaking at a Financial Times event in Washington. "I think he's convinced right now that doubling down still will enable him to make progress."

1:25 a.m. All women, children and elderly people have been evacuated from the besieged Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol, Ukraine's deputy prime minister says. "This part of the Mariupol humanitarian operation is over," Iryna Vereshchuk says. Kyiv announced on Friday an evacuation plan from Azovstal and other parts of Mariupol for Saturday. The Soviet-era steel mill, the last holdout in Mariupol for Ukrainian forces, has emerged as a symbol of resistance to the wider Russian effort to capture swaths of eastern and southern Ukraine in the 10-week-old war. Under heavy

bombardment, fighters and civilians have been trapped for weeks in deep bunkers and tunnels that crisscross the site, with little food, water or medicine.

Meanwhile, Russian forces backed by tanks and artillery renew attempts to storm Azovstal, Ukraine's military command says, part of a ferocious assault to dislodge the last Ukrainian defenders in the strategic port city on the Azov Sea.

12:12 a.m. Pro-Russian forces say 50 more people are evacuated from the besieged Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol, where scores of civilians have been trapped for weeks alongside Ukrainian fighters holed up in the Soviet-era plant. The defense headquarters of Russian-backed Donetsk separatists say on Telegram that a total of 176 civilians had now been evacuated from the steelworks. The report could not be independently verified.

Monday, May 9

4:44 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin evokes the memory of Soviet heroism in World War II to urge his army to victory in Ukraine. Addressing ranks of servicemen on Red Square on the 77th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany, Putin condemned what he called external threats to weaken and split Russia, and repeated familiar arguments he has used to justify its invasion -- that NATO was creating threats right next to its borders.

3:55 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, commemorating the country's victory over Nazi Germany in World War II, says Ukraine will win in its war with Russia and will not cede any territory. "On the Day of Victory over Nazism, we are fighting for a new victory. The road to it is difficult, but we have no doubt that we will win," he said in a written address. Russia is also marking the anniversary of the Soviet Union's World War II victory.

3:30 p.m. Russia has enough high-precision missiles and ammunition to fulfill all the tasks assigned to the country's armed forces, Russia's Interfax news agency quoted Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov as saying. A senior Pentagon official said in March that Russia, which sent thousands of troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24 in what it calls a special military operation, was running out of precision guided munitions.

2:30 p.m. Chinese exports to Russia fell in April for the second month as China's northern neighbor grappled with economic sanctions, while Russian shipments to China surged. Shipments to Russia fell 25.9% in April from a year earlier in dollar terms, worsening from a 7.7% decline the previous month, according to Reuters calculations based on

customs data on Monday. Imports from Russia, however, surged 56.6% in April, compared with an increase of 26.4% in March. Meanwhile, China's overall export growth tumbled in April as global demand weakened

12:30 p.m. President Vladimir Putin will lead anniversary celebrations of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany on Monday as Russian forces fight Ukrainians in one of the deadliest European conflicts since the end of World War II 77 years ago. From a tribune in Red Square and before a parade of troops, tanks, rockets and intercontinental ballistic missiles, Putin in recent years has used Victory Day to needle the West. In the southern port of Mariupol, one of Russia's main targets and host to some of the most destructive fighting, the deputy commander of the Azov regiment holed up in the Azovstal steel plant pleaded with the international community to help evacuate wounded soldiers. "We will continue to fight as long as we are alive to repel the Russian occupiers," Captain Sviatoslav Palamar told an online news conference.

"For a Country Heavily Dependent on Energy Imports," Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida Says, "It's a Very Difficult Decision." © Reuters

11:42 a.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida says Japan will maintain its stakes in the Sakhalin-1 and Sakhalin-2 resource projects in Russia. During an online meeting of the leaders of the Group of Seven countries earlier, Kishida announced that Japan would ban Russian crude oil imports "in principle" as part of a G-7 campaign. "[For Japan] oil imports contribute to a long-term, inexpensive and stable energy supply," Kishida told reporters. "We will take steps to phase out imports in a way that minimizes the adverse impact on people's lives and business activities."

9:00 a.m. Japan will ban Russian crude oil imports "in principle" as part of a campaign by the Group of Seven, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida says after an online meeting of the seven leaders of major industrialized nations. The G-7 has committed to ban or phase out imports of Russian oil, marking the latest attempt by the West to pressure Russian President Vladimir Putin for his invasion of Ukraine. "For a country heavily dependent on energy imports, it's a very difficult decision," Kishida said. "But G-7 coordination is most important at a time like now."

A Hotel Complex Destroyed by a Russian Missile During Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Is Pictured in Odesa, Ukraine, May 8. © Reuters

5:47 a.m. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said late on Sunday that about 60 people who were sheltering at a school in the eastern village of Bilohorivka were killed by a Russian bombing. "As a result of a Russian strike on Bilohorivka in the Luhansk region, about 60 people were killed, civilians, who simply hid at the school, sheltering from shelling," Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address.

3:15 a.m. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced new weapons and equipment for Ukraine after an unannounced visit to Kyiv. Trudeau, addressing a news conference after talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, also said Canada was imposing new sanctions on Russian individuals and entities in connection with Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Canada, he said, was reopening its embassy in Kyiv.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Attend a News Conference, as Russia's Attack on Ukraine Continues, in Kyiv, Ukraine May 8. © Reuters

3:00 a.m. As many as 60 people are feared to have been killed when a bomb struck a village school in eastern Ukraine, Luhansk region Governor Serhiy Gaidai said. About 90 people were sheltering in the school when it was hit on Saturday by a Russian bomb, setting it ablaze. "Thirty people were evacuated from the rubble, seven of whom were injured. Sixty people were likely to have died," Gaidai wrote on the Telegram messaging app, adding that two bodies had been found.

1:00 a.m. The Group of Seven leaders said in a joint statement that they will reinforce Russia's economic isolation and "elevate" a campaign against Russian elites who support President Vladimir Putin after meeting virtually with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Tuesday, May 10

9:39 p.m. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, while visiting Kyiv, says Ukraine should become a full member of the European Union but that there could be no shortcut to membership. Speaking alongside Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba, Baerbock stresses that Germany will reduce its imports of Russian energy to zero, "and that will stay that way forever."

9:38 p.m. Lithuania's parliament votes unanimously to describe Russia's actions in Ukraine as "genocide" and "terrorism" and to call for an international tribunal modeled on the Nuremberg Trials after World War II to prosecute suspected war crimes.

The motion alleges that war crimes by Russian forces include the deliberate killing of civilians, mass rape, forcible relocation of Ukrainian citizens to Russia and the destruction of economic infrastructure and cultural sites. Moscow denies targeting civilians.

6:30 p.m. French President Emmanuel Macron and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban are scheduled to discuss a potential European Union ban on oil imports from Russia, according to Macron's office. France currently holds the EU's rotating presidency. To further sanction Russia for its war in Ukraine, European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen has proposed having the 27 EU member nations phase out imports of crude oil within six months and refined products by the end of the year. Hungary says it won't vote for the proposed sanctions, saying they would have the effect of an "atomic bomb" on its economy.

6:00 p.m. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock arrives in Ukraine, the highest-ranking German government official to visit the country since Russia's invasion began on Feb. 24. Her first stop was in the town of Bucha, near Kyiv, where Russian forces are accused of having committed atrocities. Moscow, which has repeatedly denied targeting civilians in the Ukraine war, has called allegations that its forces executed civilians in Bucha while they occupied the town a "monstrous forgery" aimed at denigrating the Russian army.

3:30 p.m. The question of whether to join NATO is coming to a head this week in Finland and Sweden, where Russia's invasion of Ukraine has shattered the long-held belief that remaining outside the military alliance was the best way to avoid trouble with their giant neighbor. If Finland's president and the governing Social Democrats in both countries come out in favor of accession in the next few days, NATO could soon add two members right on Russia's doorstep. Sweden has avoided military alliances for more than 200 years, while Finland adopted neutrality after being defeated by the Soviet Union in World War II.

11:30 a.m. Japan announces new sanctions on Russia to freeze the assets of an additional 141 individuals, including Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin. Among them, 133 people are from the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, both of which are effectively controlled by pro-Russian factions in eastern Ukraine. Japan also added 71 more organizations on its list of export ban, bringing the total number of targeted bodies to 201.

A Satellite Image Supplied by Maxar Technologies Shows the Loading of Probable Kalibr Missiles Onto a Russian Kilo-Class Submarine in the Black Sea Port of Sevastopol in Crimea on April 29. © Reuters

7:30 a.m. Global insurers are expected to receive multiple claims over ships damaged or lost as the conflict in Ukraine spills over into sea lanes, insurer Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty says. Projectiles have killed two seafarers and hit six merchant vessels -- sinking two of them -- around Ukraine's coast since the start of the Russian invasion. London marine insurers have deemed the Black Sea and Sea of Azov high-risk areas, pushing the cost of insuring ships in the region to record levels with an additional premium added to annual war coverage for every voyage.

3:58 a.m. Canada will help Ukraine work out options on how to export stored grain to address global food security shaken by the war, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says.

"We know people around the world are going to be starving because of the actions of Russia," Trudeau tells Reuters in an interview.

"There is grain waiting to be shipped in Ukraine," he says. "We have to make sure that Russia doesn't prevent the grain that the world needs from getting out to the world."

"We will work to make sure that there are different routes that can be used," Foreign Minister Melanie Joly says. "We will work with different countries, including Turkey, as we know that the Bosporus is fundamental to the access of the Black Sea."

A Steelworker Operates Machinery at the Ilich Iron and Steel Plant in Mariupol in 2014. © Reuters

12:47 a.m. The U.S. will temporarily suspend 232 tariffs on Ukrainian steel for one year, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo has announced. She describes the decision to help the hard-hit industry employing 1 in 13 Ukrainians as

"a signal to the Ukrainian people that we are committed to helping them thrive in the face of Putin's aggression."

12:36 a.m. Citing the war's impact on Volkswagen's supply chain, the German carmaker's CEO has urged for a negotiated end to the armed conflict in Ukraine, the Financial Times reports.

"I think we should not give up on open markets and free trade and I think we should not give up on negotiating and trying to settle," Herbert Diess says.

Diess says Volkswagen is struggling to surpass Tesla as the world's biggest maker of electric cars by the company's own target of 2025.

Wednesday, May 11

8:33 p.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and his Finnish counterpart Sanna Marin strongly condemned Russia's aggression in Ukraine and agreed that they will take resolute and unified action over the unfolding crisis.

"If You Are Worried About the Prospect of War in Europe -- We Do Not Want That At All," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov Says on May 11 at a News Conference in Muscat After Talks With his Omani Counterpart. © Reuters

6:57 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says that Moscow does not want war in Europe, but that Western countries are keen to see Russia defeated in its military campaign in Ukraine. "If you are worried about the prospect of war in Europe -- we do not want that at all," Lavrov says at a news conference in Muscat after talks with his Omani counterpart. "But I draw your attention to the fact that it is the West that is constantly and persistently saying that in this situation, it is necessary to defeat Russia. Draw your own conclusions."

5:35 p.m. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is seeking loan guarantees for Ukraine from major EBRD shareholders, including Japan, EBRD President Odile Renaud-Basso says. The bank is endeavoring to protect the cash flow -- and the very existence -- of Ukrainian companies by asking other governments to accept some amount of risk.

3:30 p.m. Bulgaria will receive U.S. liquefied natural gas from June after Russia's Gazprom stopped gas deliveries, the government says. The arrangement was decided at a meeting between Prime Minister Kiril Petkov and U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris in Washington, according to the government. "Real deliveries of liquefied natural gas to Bulgaria at prices lower than the ones of Gazprom have been agreed as of June," the government said in a statement. Gazprom cut off gas deliveries to Bulgaria and Poland on April 27 after the countries refused to pay in rubles. Bulgaria consumes about 3 billion cubic meters of gas per year, of which over 90% was coming from Russia.

11:24 a.m. The U.S. House of Representatives approved more than $40 billion more aid for Ukraine on Tuesday, as Congress races to keep military aid flowing and boost the government in Kyiv as it grapples with the Russian invasion. The measure now heads to the Senate, which is expected to act quickly.

President Joe Biden had asked Congress to approve an additional $33 billion in aid for Ukraine two weeks ago, but lawmakers decided to increase the military and humanitarian funding.

9:40 a.m. China would prefer to take over neighboring Taiwan without military action but is working to get to a

position where its military could prevail even if the U.S. intervenes, U.S. intelligence chiefs say. China views Taiwan, a democratically governed island, as its "sacred" territory and has never renounced the possible use of force to ensure eventual unification.

"It's our view that they [the Chinese] are working hard to effectively put themselves into a position in which their military is capable of taking Taiwan over our intervention," Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines told the Senate Armed Services Committee.

2:30 a.m. The operator of Ukraine's gas distribution system says it will halt flows through a key transit point for Russian gas bound for Europe, blaming Russian troop activity.

The pipeline operator has declared force majeure at Sokhranivka, meaning the situation is beyond its control, a move that could affect Europe's energy supply, The Financial Times and other media report.

The operator proposes rerouting gas to another transit point, but Russia's Gazprom says it would be technologically impossible to shift all of the flows in this way.

Thursday, May 12

9:59 p.m. Key Finnish politicians have been warned that Russia might halt gas supplies to neighboring Finland on Friday, local newspaper Iltalehti reports, citing unnamed sources.

Finnish President Sauli Niinisto and Prime Minister Sanna Marin on Thursday said Finland would apply to join NATO "without delay." On May 5, Finland said it was prepared for the possibility of Moscow cutting off gas delivery in response to Helsinki's refusal to abide by Russian demands for gas payments to be made in rubles.

5:00 p.m. Finland's president and prime minister say they are in favor of applying for NATO membership, paving the way for the alliance to expand amid Russia's war in Ukraine. The dramatic move by Finland was announced by President Sauli Niinisto and Prime Minister Sanna Marin in a joint statement. It means that Finland is virtually certain to seek NATO membership, though a few steps remain before the application process can begin. Neighboring Sweden is expected to decide on joining NATO in the coming days.

3:10 p.m. Ukrainian forces are keeping up a counterattack to the north of the nation's second-largest city Kharkiv and recapturing several towns and villages toward the Russian border, Britain says. Russia has reportedly withdrawn units from the area and the forces are likely to redeploy after replenishing the losses to the eastern bank of the Siverskyi Donets River, the British defense ministry said. On Wednesday, Ukraine said it had pushed back Russian forces in the east to recapture Pytomnyk, a village on the main highway north of Kharkiv, about halfway to the Russian border.

3:00 p.m. Siemens says it will quit the Russian market due to the war in Ukraine, taking a 600 million euros ($630.18 million) hit to its business during the second quarter. Siemens has become the latest company to announce losses connected with its decision to leave Russia. It had previously halted new business and deliveries into the country after the invasion.

Finnish President Sauli Niinisto appears poised to bring his nation into NATO. © Reuters

11:30 a.m. President Sauli Niinisto is expected to give the green light for Finland to join NATO, a major shift in security policy that comes in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Finland, which shares a 1,300-km border and a difficult past with Russia, has gradually stepped up its cooperation with the military alliance since 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea. But it has refrained from joining in

an attempt to maintain friendly relations with its eastern neighbor. Sweden's ruling Social Democrats are expected to decide on Sunday whether to overturn decades of opposition to NATO membership, a move that would almost certainly lead to Sweden also asking to join the alliance.

4:00 a.m. Nearly a third of oil tankers operated by Russia's largest maritime transport company were sailing without reported destinations at times since the invasion of Ukraine, in what analysts say shows the difficulty of enforcing Western sanctions on Moscow's energy exports.

State-run Sovcomflot lacked destination information for up to 24 of its 76 tankers at the same time in March and April, shows a Nikkei analysis of public data provided by MarineTraffic.

The tightening sanctions net has made it harder for Russian vessels to find friendly ports of call. But it has also put Russian crude at a deep discount to international benchmarks, making it attractive to big energy buyers. Read more.

Friday, May 13

9:43 p.m. The U.K. sanctions Alina Kabaeva, a retired Olympic rhythmic gymnast whom some Western governments think is Vladimir Putin's girlfriend, as part of a crackdown on people close to the Russian president.

Britain's new sanctions also cover Kabaeva's grandmother and Putin's ex-wife, Lyudmila Ocheretnaya, as well as several of his relatives holding executive positions at major Russian firms like Gazprom. They face asset freezes and travel bans.

Burnt-Out Vehicles and the Remains of What Appears To Be a Makeshift Bridge Litter the Banks of the Siverskyi Donets River in Eastern Ukraine, in This Handout Image Uploaded on May 12. (Ukrainian Airborne Forces Command/Handout via Reuters)

6:30 p.m. Ukrainian forces destroyed a pontoon bridge and parts of Russian armored column as it tried to cross a river in the Donbas region, video footage released by Ukraine's military shows. Russia has suffered setbacks on the battlefield as Ukraine drives Russian troops out of the

region around the second-largest city of Kharkiv. This is the fastest advance since it forced the Kremlin's forces from Kyiv and the northeast over a month ago. Reuters journalists have confirmed Ukraine is now in control of territory stretching to the banks of the Siverskiy Donets River, around 40 km east of Kharkiv.

European Council President Charles Michel, Second From Right, Visits the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima on May 13. © Kyodo

3:11 p.m. European Council President Charles Michel condemns Russia during his visit to Hiroshima for threatening to use nuclear weapons following its invasion of Ukraine, saying it is a "shameful and unacceptable" threat to global security. In one of the two Japanese cities devastated by the 1945 U.S. atomic bombings at the end of World War II, Michel said he feels "seized by an intense determination" to eliminate nuclear weapons after visiting the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. Michel made his trip to highlight EU opposition to the use of nuclear arms amid tensions

heightened by threats including Russia's invasion of Ukraine and North Korean ballistic missile tests.

11:30 a.m. Ukraine says it has damaged a Russian navy logistics ship near Snake Island, a small but strategic outpost in the Black Sea. Renewed fighting around Snake Island in recent days may become a battle for control of the western Black Sea coast, as Russian forces struggle to make headway in Ukraine's north and east. "Thanks to the actions of our naval seamen, the support vessel Vsevolod Bobrov caught fire -- it is one of the newest in the Russian fleet," said Serhiy Bratchuk, a spokesman for the Odesa regional military administration.

7:27 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden has kicked off the first-ever Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit to be held in Washington as his administration makes an extended effort to demonstrate that the U.S. has not lost focus on the Pacific even while dealing with Russia's invasion of Ukraine. As Biden welcomed leaders from eight ASEAN nations for a dinner to start the two-day "special summit," the White House announced the U.S. would commit to more than $150 million in new projects to bolster Southeast Asia's climate, maritime and public health infrastructure.

Flags Fly Outside the Alliance Headquarters Ahead of a NATO Defense Ministers Meeting in Brussels on Oct. 21, 2021. The Finnish and Swedish Flags May Soon Join the Circle. © Reuters

5:59 a.m. Moscow warns Finland of consequences as it seeks to apply for NATO membership "without delay." Finland's plan to apply for NATO membership and the expectation that Sweden will follow would bring about the expansion of the Western military alliance that Russian President Vladimir Putin aimed to prevent. "Helsinki must be aware of the responsibility and consequences of such a move," Russia's foreign ministry said.

Saturday, May 14

11:55 p.m. Russian troops are withdrawing from positions around Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, after bombarding it for weeks, the Ukrainian military says, as Kyiv and Moscow's forces engaged in a grinding battle for the country's eastern industrial heartland.

Ukraine's general staff says the Russians are now focusing on guarding supply routes, while launching mortar, artillery and airstrikes in the eastern Donetsk province to "deplete Ukrainian forces and destroy fortifications."

Ukrainian forces are launching a counteroffensive near the Russian-held town of Izium in eastern Ukraine, a regional governor tells Reuters, in what could prove a serious setback for Moscow's plans to capture the entire Donbas region. Russian forces have focused much of their firepower on the Donbas in a "second phase" of their invasion announced on April 19, after they failed to reach the capital Kyiv from the north in the early weeks of the war.

Keeping up pressure on Izium and Russian supply lines will make it harder for Moscow to encircle battle-hardened Ukrainian troops on the eastern front in the Donbas.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov adds Ukraine is "entering a new -- long-term -- phase of the war."

4:53 p.m. Moscow will take adequate precautionary measures if NATO deploys nuclear forces and infrastructure closer to Russia's border, Russian news agencies quote Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko as saying on Saturday.

"It will be necessary to respond ... by taking adequate precautionary measures that would ensure the viability of deterrence," Interfax agency quotes Grushko as saying.

Moscow has no hostile intentions toward Finland and Sweden and does not see "real" reasons for those two countries to be joining the NATO alliance, Grushko adds

2:01 a.m. Estonia has asked NATO for command centers capable of overseeing more than 10,000 soldiers and the bloc's military operations in the Baltics to counter Russia amid the ongoing war in Ukraine, Estonian Defense Minister Kalle Laanet tells Nikkei.

"We are explaining right now to our allies that all three Baltic countries need a division-size command structure and also rapid deployment," Laanet says in an exclusive interview.

His remarks reflect a sense of crisis in the face of Russian aggression. "We can never rule out the chance that Russia might attack neighboring countries, for example, border countries," Laanet says. "There is always this risk." Read more.

1:20 a.m. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that "it's not possible for us to look positively" at letting Sweden and Finland into NATO.

"Scandinavian countries are like some kind of guesthouse for terrorist organizations," Erdogan says, claiming that "they are even in parliament." All decisions to expand NATO must be unanimous, meaning that longtime member Turkey can single-handedly scuttle any attempts by Sweden and Finland to join.

12:40 a.m. Asian aircraft lessors' losses in Russia have risen to nearly $1.2 billion after Japan's SMBC Aviation Capital, the player with the biggest exposure to the sanctions-hit country, reported the industry's latest financial damage from the Ukraine war. Read more.

12:30 a.m. Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group Holding's joint venture in Russia has laid off about 40% of employees since the invasion of Ukraine as the war has severely disrupted cross-border business, an employee with knowledge of the matter told Nikkei Asia. Read more.

12:18 a.m. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has spoken with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu for the first time since Feb. 18, urging an immediate cease-fire in Ukraine and emphasizing the importance of maintaining lines of communication, according to a Pentagon readout of the call.

Alina Kabaeva, a Former Russian Rhythmic Gymnast Who Is Believed To Be Russian President Vladimir Putin's Girlfriend, Has Been Sanctioned by the U.K. © Reuters

Sunday, May 15

10:49 p.m. Ukraine has deployed many of its new M-777 howitzers from the U.S. on the front lines, according to the American Embassy in Kyiv.

"All but one of the 90 Howitzers sent by the United States are now in Ukraine, many now deployed on the front lines," the embassy says in a tweet with a video showing the weapons in action.

The howitzers are part of aid from the U.S. to help Ukraine fend off Russia's invasion. The M-777 is seen as particularly significant because of its long range and accuracy.

9:50 p.m. Sweden and Finland must stop supporting terrorist groups in their countries, provide clear security guarantees, and lift export bans on Turkey as they seek NATO membership, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu says after meeting in Berlin with counterparts in the alliance.

5:29 p.m. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba says he had met U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Berlin and that "more weapons and other aid is on the way to Ukraine." "We agreed to work closely together to ensure that Ukrainian food exports reach consumers in Africa and Asia. Grateful to Secretary Blinken and the U.S. for their leadership and unwavering support," Kuleba tweets.

3:00 p.m. A missile strike hit some military infrastructure in the western Ukrainian region of Lviv early on Sunday, the region's Gov. Maxim Kozitsky says in a post on the Telegram messaging app. "Four enemy missiles hit one of the military infrastructures in the Lviv region," Kozitsky says. "The

object is completely destroyed. According to preliminary information, there are no casualties. No one sought medical help."

Ukrainian Servicemen Ride a Motorcycle on the Road Which Connects Kharkiv and a Village Recently Retook by the Ukrainian Army. © Reuters

2:40 p.m. Russia's offensive in Ukraine's Donbas region "has lost momentum and fallen significantly behind schedule," British military intelligence says. "Under the current conditions, Russia is unlikely to dramatically accelerate its rate of advance over the next 30 days," the British military says in a regular Twitter bulletin.

4:20 a.m. The situation in the Donbas region remains very difficult, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says, adding that Russian forces were still trying to demonstrate some kind of victory. "On the 80th day of a full-scale invasion this seems especially crazy, but they are not stopping their efforts," he says in a video address.

3:08 a.m. Mitch McConnell, the top Republican in the U.S. Senate, pays an unannounced visit to Kyiv with other Republican senators to meet President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. McConnell is pressing Republican Sen. Rand Paul to end his opposition to a $40 billion aid package for Ukraine, which has overwhelming support from both major parties.

2:20 a.m. Portugal blocks the sale of a $10.4 million house over a "strong conviction" it belongs to sanctions-hit Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich. The property registry of the mansion was frozen -- meaning it cannot be sold, rented or mortgaged -- on March 25 at the request of the foreign ministry, a month after Russia's full invasion of Ukraine.

"We have a strong conviction, which hasn't been fully confirmed, the house belongs to Roman Abramovich," Foreign Minister Joao Cravinho says on the sidelines of a NATO meeting in Berlin. "The challenge here is that many of those sanctioned do not have their properties and assets in their names."

12:33 a.m. Moscow is the target of "total hybrid war" by the West but will withstand sanctions by forging deeper partnerships with China, India and others, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says. In a speech on the 80th day since Russia invaded Ukraine, Lavrov pointed to the barrage of sanctions imposed by the West to portray Russia as the target, not the perpetrator, of aggression. "The collective West has declared total hybrid war on us and it is hard to predict how long all this will last but it is clear the consequences will be felt by everyone, without exception," he says.

Monday, May 16

5:00 p.m. The Russian ruble rises to 64 per dollar and climbs toward a near five-year high against the euro, supported by continuing restrictions on currency trading. The ruble is the world's best-performing currency this year, although this is due to artificial support from capital controls that Russia imposed to shield its financial sector in late February after it invaded Ukraine. Against the euro, the ruble rose 1% to 66.39, staying near its strongest level of 64.94 since June 2017.

4:00 p.m. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov says Finland and Sweden choosing to join the NATO military alliance is a mistake that will have far-reaching consequences and see the global situation change radically, news agencies report. Ryabkov said Finland and Sweden should have no illusions that Russia will simply put up with their decision, Interfax reports.

10:00 a.m. Ukraine's gas transit system operator said over the weekend that it had resumed operations at two distribution stations in the Kharkiv region and restarted gas supply to more than 3,000 consumers. Ukraine has scored a series of successes since Russia invaded on Feb. 24, forcing Moscow's commanders to abandon an advance on the capital Kyiv before making rapid gains to drive them from Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-biggest city.

A Ukrainian Serviceman Walks Past a Destroyed House in Ruska Lozova, a Village Retaken by Ukrainian Forces in the Kharkiv Region on May 15. © Reuters

9:45 a.m. Japan's wholesale prices jumped 10% in April from the same month a year earlier, the biggest increase in at least 40 years, government data shows, as the Ukraine crisis and a weak yen pushed up the cost of energy and raw materials.

3:11 a.m. Republican leader Mitch McConnell says he expects the U.S. Senate to vote Wednesday local time to approve about $40 billion in proposed aid to help Ukraine resist Russia's invasion after holding a related procedural vote Monday local time.

2:31 a.m. NATO and the U.S. express confidence that Turkey will not hold up membership of Finland and Sweden in the alliance as the two Nordic states take firm steps to join in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Tuesday, May 17

9:39 p.m. President Joe Biden will welcome Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and Finnish President Sauli Niinisto to Washington on Thursday, the White House says. They will discuss Finland's and Sweden's NATO applications as well as European security and support for Ukraine.

Meanwhile, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz says he is confident Turkey will support Finland and Sweden in their bid to join NATO. Turkey surprised its NATO allies last week by saying it would not view the applications of Sweden and Finland positively.

8:16 p.m. Ukraine's Eurovision Song Contest winners plan a tour of Europe to raise money for their country's army as it continues to put up fierce resistance to Russian forces more than 80 days after they invaded the country, they say. Kalush Orchestra on Saturday rode a wave of popular support to win the competition, giving their compatriots a much-needed morale boost.

8:00 p.m. Russia is not planning to block Alphabet's YouTube, the minister for digital development says, acknowledging that such a move would likely see Russian users suffer and should therefore be avoided. Russia has blocked other foreign social media platforms, but despite months of fines and threats against YouTube for failing to delete content Moscow deems illegal and for restricting access to some Russian media, it has stopped short of delivering a killer blow to the video-hosting service.

6:15 p.m. Russia's defense ministry says that its missiles destroyed U.S. and European arms shipments in Ukraine's western Lviv region. It has also confirmed an earlier report

from Russian-backed separatists that more than 250 Ukrainian fighters holed up in Mariupol's Azovstal steel plant had laid down their arms and surrendered, of whom 51 were wounded.

10:00 a.m. Ukraine's military says it is working to evacuate all remaining troops from their last stronghold in the besieged port of Mariupol, ceding control of the city to Russia after months of bombardment. The evacuation likely marked the end of the longest and bloodiest battle of the Ukraine war and a significant defeat for Ukraine. "The 'Mariupol' garrison has fulfilled its combat mission," the General Staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces said in a statement. "The supreme military command ordered the commanders

of the units stationed at Azovstal to save the lives of the personnel."

9:36 a.m. The U.S. Air Force says it conducted a successful test of a hypersonic weapon, which flew at five times the speed of sound. The test was conducted on Saturday off the coast of southern California when a B-52 bomber released an Air-launched Rapid Response Weapon, the Air Force said in a statement.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan on Monday Complicated Sweden and Finland's Historic Bid To Join NATO, Accusing Them of Refusing To Extradite "Terrorists" Wanted by his Country. © AP

3:15 a.m. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan reiterates his opposition to Sweden's and Finland's efforts to join NATO, telling both countries not to bother sending their delegations to Ankara to convince him otherwise.

Finland and Sweden lack a clear stance against "terrorist groups," Turkish news agency Anadolu quotes Erdogan as saying in a news conference in Algeria.

"We would not say yes to those who impose sanctions on Turkey joining NATO," Erdogan says.

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin suggests Moscow could accept Finland and Sweden joining the Western alliance, as long as they did not allow NATO bases in their countries.

Putin says the proposed NATO enlargement poses "no direct threat for Russia," adding he has "no problems" with either Finland or Sweden.

Finland's Prime Minister Sanna Marin Attends a Joint News Conference on Finland's Security Policy Decisions at the Presidential Palace in Helsinki on May 15. © Reuters

3:00 a.m. McDonald's will "completely exit" Russia, selling off restaurants there in its first-ever "de-Arching" of a major market, its chief says. In a memo, President and CEO Chris Kempczinski lays out business reasons for the move and grapples with its ethical implications.

"Some might argue that providing access to food and continuing to employ tens of thousands of ordinary citizens, is surely the right thing to do," he writes. "But it is impossible to ignore the humanitarian crisis caused by the war in Ukraine. And it is impossible to imagine the Golden Arches representing the same hope and promise that led us to enter the Russian market 32 years ago." The company says it will retain its trademarks in Russia, and Kempczinski leaves open the possibility of a future return. Read more.

2:10 a.m. The highest-ranking uniformed officer in Japan's Self-Defense Forces will attend a NATO Military Chiefs of Defense meeting for the first time Thursday, according to the Ministry of Defense, as Tokyo seeks to reach a shared understanding with the alliance on the Asia-Pacific security environment.

Gen. Koji Yamazaki, chief of staff of the Joint Staff, departed from Japan for Brussels on Monday for the NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Defense Session. Read more.

Wednesday, May 18

Russian Soldier Vadim Shyshimarin, 21, Suspected of Violations of the Laws and Norms of War, During a Court Hearing in Kyiv. © Reuters

11:00 p.m. A Russian soldier pleads guilty in a Kyiv court to having killed a civilian, in the first war crimes trial since Russia launched its full-scale invasion.

Sgt. Vadim Shyshimarin pleaded guilty to shooting a 62-year-old man on a bicycle in the village of Chupakhivka in the Sumy region, about 200 miles east of Kyiv, four days after Russia invasion began on Feb. 24.

Asked by the presiding judge whether he accepted his guilt, Shyshimarin said: "Yes. Fully, yes."

9:01 p.m. Turkey has blocked the start of negotiations on the entry of Sweden and Finland into NATO, according to online news outlet Middle East Eye, signaling trouble ahead for the two Nordic nations' applications. Turkey voted against starting the talks at a NATO ambassadorial-level meeting in Brussels, the London-based organization said. The countries formally applied that day to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization -- a decision, spurred by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, that marked a shift from their long-held neutrality.

6:20 p.m. Japanese shipper Nippon Yusen, better known as NYK Line, is considering plans to withdraw its automobile land freight business from Russia within a few months at the earliest. The company has found it difficult to continue its operations, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to international sanctions and boycotts, causing a fall in demand for such delivery services.

4:15 p.m. Britain and fellow Group of Seven nations are looking at how Russian assets can be used to fund the rebuilding of Ukraine, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss says. "We need a new Marshall Plan to rebuild Ukraine, and in fact we've just been discussing this at the G-7 meeting that I had with my colleagues from around the world. We are looking at what we can do to use Russian assets to help pay for this," she told Times Radio.

British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss Said, "We Need a New Marshall Plan To Rebuild Ukraine." © Reuters

3:46 p.m. Swiss packaging group Vetropack will cut roughly 400 jobs in Ukraine following severe war damage to its Hostomel plant, the company says, a sign of the widening economic toll of the fighting. The manufacturer of glass packaging, which has employed roughly 600 at the plant, northwest of Kyiv, said it had continued to pay full salaries to its people there since Russia's invasion of Ukraine while releasing them from work duties. But now, with damage from military activity rendering the plant inoperable for the near future and hostilities continuing in the region, the company said it would need to let go roughly two-thirds of the workforce.

3:07 p.m. Finland and Sweden formally applied to join the NATO alliance at its headquarters, setting in motion an accession process that is expected to take only a few weeks. Ratification of all 30 allied parliaments could take up to a year, diplomats say.

5:06 a.m. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen urges America's partners to increase financial support to Ukraine in her speech to the Brussels Economic Forum.

"What's clear is that the bilateral and multilateral support announced so far will not be sufficient to address Ukraine's needs, even in the short term," she says, citing the country's need to pay soldiers, employees and pensioners and to operate its economy.

1:20 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tweets on his phone call with French President Emmanuel Macron. The two leaders also discussed Ukraine's bid for European Union membership, Zelenskyy says.

Thursday, May 19

6:03 p.m. Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi calls for an urgent cease-fire in Ukraine so that serious negotiations can begin to end the war. He added that Italy will continue to support Ukraine, without ruling out the supply of weapons. Draghi, who has taken a hard line against Russia since its Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine, says it is important to maintain pressure through economic sanctions "because we have to bring Moscow to the negotiating table."

5:54 p.m. Switzerland is reopening its embassy in Kyiv, with five staff members, including the ambassador, set to return to the Ukrainian capital over the next few days, says the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs. The decision to reopen the embassy after it was temporarily closed two and a half months ago was based on an in-depth analysis of the security situation, the FDFA added.

Finland and Sweden Have Formally Applied To Join the NATO Alliance, but Poland Says It Will Come to Their Aid Even Before They Gain Membership, Should They Be Attacked. © Reuters

5:12 p.m. Poland will assist Sweden and Finland, should they be attacked before they gain NATO membership, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki says. "I consider the accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO as an important signal of strengthening security in Europe," he says during a conference. "I want to make it clear that in the event of an attack on Sweden or Finland during their accession (process), Poland will come to their aid."

Finland and Sweden formally applied to join the NATO alliance on Wednesday, a decision spurred by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and setting in motion an accession process that is expected to take only a few weeks.

12:30 p.m. Japan will double its financial aid to Ukraine to $600 million, in a coordinated move with the World Bank, to help the country meet near-term fiscal necessities in the face of difficulties brought on by Russia's invasion, Japanese

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters. Japan, a member of the Group of Seven industrialized nations, had previously announced $300 million in loans to Ukraine in April.

10:35 a.m. The U.S. Senate has confirmed career diplomat Bridget Brink as ambassador to Ukraine, a critical post that has been vacant for three years. Brink was confirmed by unanimous voice vote.

Google's Russian Subsidiary Plans To File for Bankruptcy After Authorities Seize its Bank Account. Free Services, Including Search and YouTube Will Keep Operating, a Google Spokesperson Says. © Reuters

6:45 a.m. Google's Russian subsidiary plans to file for bankruptcy after authorities seize its bank account, making it impossible to pay staff and vendors. But free services, including search and YouTube will keep operating, a Google spokesperson says. The Alphabet unit has been under pressure in Russia for months for failing to delete content Moscow deems illegal and for restricting access to some

Russian media on YouTube. But the Kremlin has so far stopped short of blocking access to the company's services.

4:50 a.m. The U.S. and Turkey "reaffirm their strong cooperation as partners and NATO allies," their governments say in a short statement after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu in New York. The talks come after Turkey expressed opposition to NATO membership bids by Sweden and Finland. The statement does not mention the two countries' applications to join the alliance. Blinken and Cavusoglu "reiterated their support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity against Russia's unacceptable war," according to the statement.

3:00 a.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken confirms the reopening of the American Embassy in Kyiv. "The Ukrainian people, with our security assistance, have defended their homeland in the face of Russia's unconscionable invasion, and, as a result, the Stars and Stripes are flying over the Embassy once again," Blinken says in a statement

2:19 a.m. The U.S. Embassy in Kyiv reopens after a three-month closure due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. A few diplomats will return initially to staff the mission, spokesperson Daniel Langenkamp tells Reuters. Consular operations will not resume immediately, and a no-travel advisory from the State Department remains in place across Ukraine, he says.

2:10 a.m. The Ukrainian fighters being evacuated from a steel plant in Mariupol fulfilled their combat mission successfully, Mayor Vadym Boychenko tells Nikkei in a

virtual interview Wednesday as one of Europe's bloodiest battles since World War II comes to a close.

"The Mariupol fighters ... saved not only Mariupol city but Ukraine itself," Boychenko said, adding that the soldiers defended the city for 80 days.

Boychenko hits that talks with Russia to ensure the safety of the Ukrainian troops and to exchange captured soldiers are moving slowly. Read more.

Friday, May 20

10:24 p.m. Russia's Gazprom will halt flows of natural gas to Finland starting Saturday, after Finnish state-owned gas wholesaler Gasum refused to pay its Russian supplier in rubles.

Gasum, which had warned Wednesday that Russian supplies could be cut, says it will continue to supply gas to Finnish customers from other sources through the Balticconnector pipeline linking Finland with Estonia. Most supply contracts are denominated in euros or dollars, but Gazprom Export has demanded that European countries pay in rubles because of sanctions imposed over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Natural gas accounts for only a small part of Finland's household energy use but a larger share of industrial power.

5:31 p.m. In a sign of Russia's urgent need to bolster its war effort in Ukraine, its parliament says it will consider a bill to allow Russians over the age of 40 and foreigners over

30 to sign up for the military. The website of the State Duma, parliament's lower house, said the move would enable the military to utilize the skills of older professionals. "For the use of high-precision weapons, the operation of weapons and military equipment, highly professional specialists are needed. Experience shows that they become such by the age of 40-45," it said. Previously only Russians aged 18 to 40 and foreigners aged 18 to 30 could enter into a first contract with the military.

2:30 p.m. Russian shelling in Ukraine's eastern region of Luhansk has killed 13 civilians over the past 24 hours, the regional governor, Serhiy Gaidai, says. Twelve were killed in the town of Sievierodonesk, where a Russian assault has been unsuccessful, he said. The town and the city of Lysychansk are in an area where Russian troops have launched an offensive.

A Soldier of the Self-Proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic at the Savur-Mohyla War Memorial Complex Outside the Rebel-Held City of Donetsk, Ukraine in 2018. © Reuters

2:26 p.m. Russia is likely to reinforce operations in the industrial Donbas region once they secure the city of Mariupol, British military intelligence says. As many as 1,700 soldiers are likely to have surrendered at the Azovstal steel factory in Mariupol, the report added. Moscow also said on Thursday that 1,730 Ukrainian fighters had surrendered from the steel factory so far, including 771 in the past 24 hours.

A Cargo Ship Carrying Over 71,000 Tons of Ukrainian Corn in the Romanian Black Sea Port of Constanta on April 28. (Inquam Photos via Reuters)

9:01 a.m. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken accuses Russia of using food as a weapon in Ukraine by holding "hostage" supplies for not just Ukrainians, but also millions around the world. Addressing the United Nations Security Council, Blinken appealed to Russia to stop blockading Ukrainian ports. "The Russian government seems to think that using food as a weapon will help accomplish what its invasion has not -- to break the spirit of the Ukrainian people," he said. "The food supply for millions of Ukrainians

and millions more around the world has quite literally been held hostage."

5:56 a.m. The U.S. Senate approves roughly $40 billion in new assistance for Ukraine -- the largest American aid package yet for the country -- by a lopsided 86-11 vote, clearing the way for President Joe Biden to sign it into law. All of the "no" votes come from Republicans.

1:08 a.m. Finnish President Sauli Niinisto pledges to commit to Turkey's security if his country joins NATO and says Finland is willing to discuss all of Ankara's concerns over its membership "in an open and constructive manner."

"Finland has always had broad and good bilateral relations to Turkey," Niinisto said at the White House, where U.S. President Joe Biden was hosting the leaders of Finland and Sweden following their formal applications for NATO membership. "As NATO allies, we will commit to Turkey's security, just as Turkey will commit to our security. We take terrorism seriously. We condemn terrorism in all its forms, and we are actively engaged in combating it."

Discussions to address Turkey's concerns have already taken place and will continue in the coming days, Niinisto said.

A Sign With the McDonald's Logo Stands Outside a Restaurant in Omsk, Russia. The World's Largest Burger Chain Says It Will Sell its Russian Business to Current Licensee Alexander Govor. © Reuters

12:55 a.m. McDonald's says it has agreed to sell its restaurant portfolio in Russia for an undisclosed sum to Alexander Govor, who since 2015 has been a licensee and operated 25 restaurants in Siberia.

The world's largest burger chain owns about 84% of its nearly 850 restaurants in Russia.

The announcement comes days after McDonald's said it would leave the country, while retaining its trademarks, in light of the Ukraine war. In March, the company had decided to temporarily close all its restaurants in Russia and pause all operations there.

Saturday, May 21

4:00 a.m. Wimbledon is stripped of its ranking points by the ATP and WTA tours over its decision to exclude players from Russia and Belarus at the 2022 Championships due to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. The governing bodies of

tennis have banned Russia and Belarus from international team competitions but let players from the two countries compete as neutrals.

Separately, 51 Ukrainian athletes have died since Russia's invasion began, the International Olympic Committee reported at a meeting in Switzerland. They include a promising female gymnast in her teens.

2:30 a.m. Ukraine wants Japan to impose a total import ban on Russian oil and gas, and to more fully participate in the squeezing of funds that might otherwise flow into Moscow's war chest

Ukrainian Finance Minister Sergii Marchenko also says Ukraine expects Japan and other developed nations to direct frozen Russian assets to the effort to rebuild his country.

"We need a full oil and gas embargo," Marchenko says in an interview with Nikkei. "Russia receives money [from oil and gas exports] and can spend this money on military aggression toward Ukraine." Read more.

12:20 a.m. Former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has resigned as chairman of the board of Russian state-owned oil group Rosneft, the latest development in the controversy over his close relationship with Moscow.

Former German intelligence officer Matthias Warnig has also stepped down from the board, German and other media report, citing a statement from Rosneft.

Sunday, May 22

11:13 p.m. Polish citizens in Ukraine will be granted the same rights that Ukrainian refugees in Poland are receiving, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says during a visit to Kyiv by his Polish counterpart, Andrzej Duda. Poland

has granted the right to live and work and claim social security payments to over 3 million Ukrainian refugees fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

11:01 p.m. Only Ukraine has the right to decide its future, Polish President Andrzej Duda tells lawmakers in Kyiv, as he becomes the first foreign leader to give a speech in person to the Ukrainian parliament since Russia's invasion. Duda also says he will not rest until Ukraine becomes a European Union member.

"Worrying voices have appeared, saying that Ukraine should give in to Putin's demands," Duda says. "Only Ukraine has the right to decide about its future ... nothing about you without you."

10:05 p.m. The Russian-appointed head of the occupied Ukrainian town next to Europe's largest nuclear plant was injured in an explosion on Sunday, a Ukrainian official and a Russian news agency say. Andrei Shevchuk, appointed mayor of Enerhodar following the Russian army's occupation of the town, was in intensive care following the attack.

Many residents work at the two power plants next to the town, one of which is the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, the largest nuclear power station in Europe. Reuters was unable to independently confirm the attack.

5:15 a.m. Ukraine rules out agreeing to a cease-fire with Russia and says Kyiv would not accept any deal with Moscow that involved ceding territory. Admitting Kyiv's stance was becoming more uncompromising, presidential

adviser Mykhailo Podolyak says making concessions would backfire because Russia would hit back harder after any break in fighting. "The war will not stop" after any concessions, he tells Reuters. "It will just be put on pause for some time."

Podolyak describes as "very strange" calls in the West for an urgent cease-fire that would involve Russian forces remaining in territory they have occupied in Ukraine's south and east. Russian "forces must leave the country and after that the resumption of the peace process will be possible," he says.

12:12 a.m. While in South Korea, U.S. President Joe Biden signs a bill to provide nearly $40 billion in aid for Ukraine, the White House says.

Monday, May 23

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy Delivered a Virtual Address to Delegates at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, on May 23. © Reuters

7:30 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tells a meeting of global business leaders in Davos that the world is at a critical juncture, and must ratchet up sanctions against Russia as a warning to countries contemplating the use of brute force.

"History is at a turning point... This is really the moment when it is decided whether brute force will rule the world," Zelenskyy tells the conference, Reuters reports.

1:45 p.m. Japan, the U.S. and five other countries condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine in a statement after Asia-Pacific trade ministers failed to agree on a stance on Russia at a meeting held in Bangkok over the weekend, the Japanese Foreign Ministry says. Accusing Moscow of an "unprovoked war of aggression," the statement said the seven countries "strongly urge Russia to immediately cease its use of force and completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its

military forces from Ukraine." The seven nations -- which also include Australia, Canada, Chile, South Korea and New Zealand -- also expressed "grave concern" about the impact of the Russian actions on food and energy security.

12:50 p.m. Ukraine has ruled out a cease-fire or any territorial concessions to Russia. Moscow has stepped up its pounding of the Donbas and Mykolaiv regions with airstrikes and artillery fire, in what Ukraine has described as a "scorched earth" strategy to win control of the eastern front. "The war must end with the complete restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty," Andriy Yermak, Ukraine's presidential chief of staff said in a Twitter post on Sunday.

10:03 a.m. More than 100 million people have been driven from their homes around the world, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) says, citing new data about those escaping violence, conflict, persecution and human rights violations. The war in Ukraine has been one of the factors propelling millions of people to flee, the UNHCR said, adding that protracted conflict in places like Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo were other factors behind the high numbers.

Cargo Ships Are Docked at the Now Blockaded Port of Odesa in 2016. U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson Has Resolved To Ensure Ukraine Is Able To Export to the Rest of the World. © Reuters

6:00 a.m. U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy have discussed Russia's blockade of Ukraine's shipping port Odesa, a Downing Street spokesperson says. Johnson resolved to redouble efforts to provide vital food and humanitarian aid to the people of Ukraine and ensure the country was able to export to the rest of the world, the spokesperson added.

5:42 a.m. Ukraine's parliament has banned the symbols "Z" and "V," used by Russia's military to promote its war in Ukraine, but agreeing to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's call to allow their use for educational or historic purposes. Yaroslav Zheleznyak, an opposition member, announced the decision on the Telegram messaging app, saying 313 deputies had voted in favor in the 423-member Verkhovna Rada assembly.

Tuesday, May 24

10:30 p.m. In unprecedentedly strong language, the leaders of the Quad expressed opposition to coercive, provocative or unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo in the Indo-Pacific.

The joint statement, issued after the leaders of Japan, Australia, India and the U.S. met for a summit in Tokyo on Tuesday, did not mention China by name, but the finger-pointing was clear.

But the leaders were less clear when it came to Russia. The joint statement avoided blaming Russia directly for the war in Ukraine and only described the situation there as a "tragic crisis." Read more.

9:26 p.m. The Chinese and Russian air forces conduct a joint patrol over the Sea of Japan, East China Sea and the Western Pacific, China's Defense Ministry says. The patrol, the first since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, was part of an annual military exercise, the ministry says. Moscow says Tuesday's patrol involved Russian Tu-95 and Chinese Xian H-6 strategic bombers. Japanese and South Korean air force planes shadowed the Russian and Chinese jets for part of the exercise, Russia says.

5:44 p.m. The United States is confident Finland and Sweden will be able to resolve Turkey's concerns as they seek NATO membership, Deputy U.S. Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks says. We are "confident that Finland and Sweden will be able to resolve those [concerns] with the Turks directly," Hicks said while speaking alongside her Norwegian counterpart in Oslo.

5:33 p.m. Jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny lambastes President Vladimir Putin in a live court hearing, casting him as a madman who started a "stupid war" in Ukraine based on lies. "This is a stupid war which your Putin started," Navalny told an appeals court in Moscow via video link from a corrective penal colony. "This war was built on lies. ... One madman has got his claws into Ukraine, and I do not know what he wants to do with it -- this crazy thief."

U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, Left, and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley on May 23 in Washington. Milley Has Opened the Door to U.S. Troops Returning to Ukraine To Play Noncombat Roles. © AP

12:30 p.m. Nearly 50 defense leaders from around the world met on Monday and agreed to send more advanced weapons to Ukraine, including a Harpoon launcher and missiles to protect its coast, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin tells reporters. Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, added that a "low level" discussion is underway on how the U.S. might need to adjust its training of Ukrainian forces and on whether some U.S. troops should be based in Ukraine. The U.S. withdrew its few troops in Ukraine before the war and has no plans to send in combat forces. Milley's comments opened the possibility troops could return for embassy security or other noncombat roles.

12:00 p.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida says the Indo-Pacific region should avoid acts of aggression similar to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, opening a Quad nations meeting in Tokyo. At the outset of the summit

attended by U.S. President Joe Biden, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and new Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Kishida said, "There is great significance in demonstrating the four countries' solidarity and our strong commitment to the shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific."

11:19 a.m. A veteran Russian diplomat to the U.N. Office at Geneva says he handed in his resignation before sending out a scathing letter to foreign colleagues inveighing against the "aggressive war unleashed" by Russian President Vladimir Putin in Ukraine. Boris Bondarev, 41, confirmed his resignation in a letter delivered Monday morning after a diplomatic official passed on his English-language statement to The Associated Press. "For twenty years of my diplomatic career I have seen different turns of our foreign policy, but never have I been so ashamed of my country as on Feb. 24 of this year," he wrote, alluding to the date of Russia's invasion.

Russian Sgt. Vadim Shishimarin Listens to his Translator During a Court Hearing in Kyiv. The Court Sentenced the 21-Year-Old Soldier to Life in Prison on Monday for Killing a Ukrainian Civilian, in the First War Crimes Trial Held Since Russia's Invasion. © AP

9:21 a.m. A captured Russian soldier who pleaded guilty to killing a civilian was sentenced by a Ukrainian court Monday to life in prison -- the maximum -- amid signs the Kremlin may, in turn, put on trial some of the fighters who surrendered at Mariupol's steelworks. In the first of what could be a multitude of war crimes trials held by Ukraine, Russian Sgt. Vadim Shishimarin, 21, was sentenced for the killing of a 62-year-old man who was shot in the head in a village in the northeastern Sumy region in the opening days of the war.

Shishimarin, a member of a tank unit, had claimed he was following orders, and he apologized to the man's widow in court. His Ukraine-appointed defense attorney, Victor Ovsyanikov, argued his client had been unprepared for the "violent military confrontation" and mass casualties that Russian troops encountered when they invaded. He said he would appeal.

9:00 a.m. The European Union will likely agree an embargo on Russian oil imports "within days," according to its biggest member Germany. Many of the EU's 27 member states are heavily reliant on Russian energy, and Hungary stuck to its demands on Monday for energy investment before it agrees to such an embargo. "We will reach a breakthrough within days," Germany's Economy Minister Robert Habeck told broadcaster ZDF.

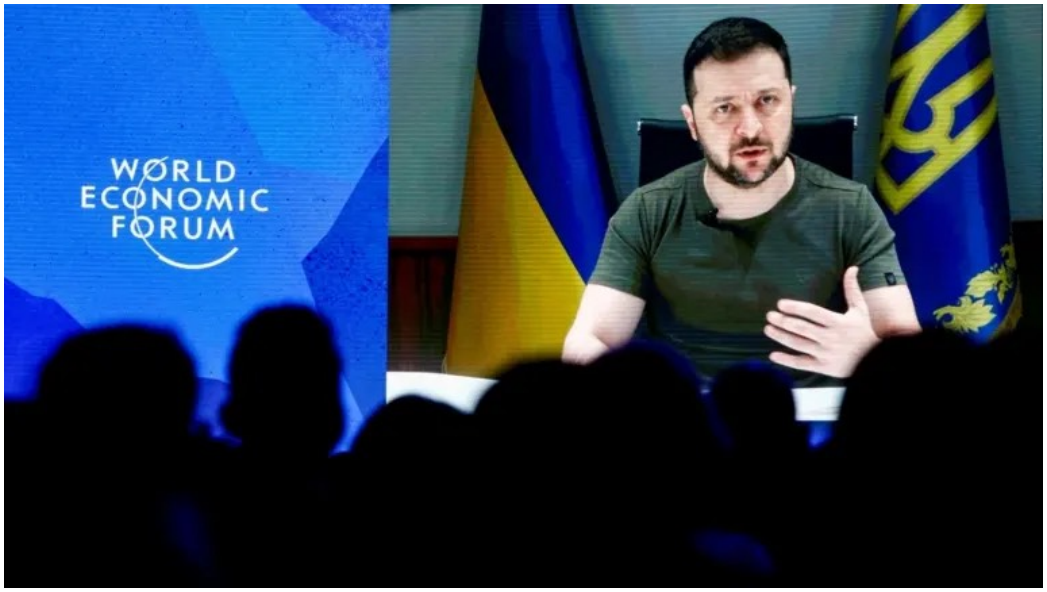
Wednesday, May 25

11:00 p.m. Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki has apologized for introducing himself as "Zelenskyy" at a panel discussion, in what he called an ill-advised "joke."

"I had absolutely no intention of belittling the situation in Ukraine," Tamaki tells reporters, explaining that he had been talking about the Ukrainian president before the start of his remarks.

9:55 p.m. While the conflict in Ukraine has hit the brakes on M&A activity and private equity fundraising for now, there are still positives to be found, according to Carlyle Group CEO Kewsong Lee.

"The best CEOs and the companies in the industries around the world are starting to try to think through what are the opportunities that are being created. That's the mindset that Carlyle has," says Lee, who talked with Nikkei about the promise he sees in the energy sector and in Asia. Read more



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Speaks at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on May 23. © Reuters

3:42 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Wednesday that he was only willing to talk directly to Russian President Vladimir Putin, not intermediaries. He added that if Putin "understands reality," there is a possibility of finding a diplomatic way out of the conflict.

Zelenskyy, speaking to an audience at the World Economic Forum in Davos, also said that Ukraine would fight until it recovered all of its territory. He said Moscow should withdraw its troops back to the lines in place before Russia began its invasion on Feb. 24. "That might be a first step

towards talks," he said, adding that Russia has been playing for time in its talks with Ukraine.

12:15 p.m. Australian tennis player Daria Saville says she can no longer return to Russia, the country of her birth, after protesting the military intervention in Ukraine. Saville wore yellow and blue, the colors of Ukraine, at the Paris Open in March and urged President Vladimir Putin to stop the war and the Russian army to return home in a post on social media.

"Already I can't really go back to Russia, no," she told Australian media at the French Open. "I definitely do support the Ukrainian players. ... Imagine not having a home." Saville, whose parents live in Moscow, represented Russia in tennis until emigrating to Australia seven years ago.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen Recently Said Washington Was Unlikely To Extend the License Letting Russia Avert Default on its Government Debt. © AP

5:36 a.m. The United States will not extend a key waiver set to expire on Wednesday that allows Russia to pay U.S. bondholders, which could push Moscow closer to the brink of default as Washington ramps up pressure on the country following its invasion of Ukraine.

The U.S. Treasury Department will not extend a license, set to expire at 12:01 a.m. EDT (04:01 GMT), allowing Russia to make payments on its sovereign debt to U.S. persons. The waiver had allowed Moscow to keep paying interest and principal and avert default on its government debt. Russia has almost $2 billion worth of payments on its international bonds falling due up to the end of the year.

12:45 a.m. The U.S. Department of Energy announces a sale of up to 40.1 million barrels of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, part of President Joe Biden's plan to release more oil into the market in an attempt to bring down gasoline and diesel prices.

Thursday, May 26

8:15 p.m. China should not take any cues from Russia's invasion of Ukraine to attempt further advances in the disputed South China Sea, Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob says in an exclusive interview. "We hope China doesn't take advantage of what is happening between Russia and Ukraine," Ismail Sabri tells Nikkei in his first interview with international media since he became prime minister last August. "Not only China but all other major powers should not take advantage in the South China Sea." Read more.

7:00 p.m. Turkey is in negotiations with Russia and Ukraine to open a corridor via the Bosporus for grain

exports from Ukraine, a senior Turkish official told Reuters. Ukraine's Black Sea ports have been blocked since Russia invaded in February and more than 20 million tons of grain are stuck in silos there.

"Turkey is negotiating with both Russia and Ukraine for the export of grains from Ukraine," the official said, requesting anonymity because the talks were confidential.

The Kremlin rejects U.S. and European Union claims that Russia had blocked grain exports from Ukraine, and accused the West of creating such a situation by imposing sanctions.

"We categorically do not accept these accusations. On the contrary, we blame Western countries of taking actions that have led to this," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said in a conference call with reporters. Moscow calls for the West to remove the sanctions which it says are blocking grain exports from Ukraine.

5:00 p.m. Russia's central bank lowers its key interest rate to 11% and says it sees room for more cuts this year, as inflation slows from more than 20-year highs and the economy is about to contract. It announced the move at an extraordinary meeting after cutting the key rate to 14% in April, weeks after an emergency rate increase to 20% triggered by Russian invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24. The central bank said it "holds open the prospect of key rate reduction at its upcoming meetings."

3:11 p.m. The leader of Russian-backed separatists in the breakaway Donetsk region calls for the military operation in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine to be accelerated, Russia's state-owned RIA Novosti news agency reports. Denis Pushilin, head of the self-proclaimed Donetsk

People's Republic, said Kyiv had blocked water supplies to key cities in the north of the region and called for military action to be stepped up.

A Police Officer Walks Next to a School Building Damaged by a Russian Military Strike in the Settlement of Kostiantynivka in the Donetsk Region of Ukraine on May 22. © Reuters

12:30 p.m. Russian forces shelled more than 40 towns in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region, Ukraine's military says, threatening to shut off the last main escape route for civilians trapped in the path of the invasion, now in its fourth month. After failing to seize Ukraine's capital Kyiv or its second city Kharkiv, Russia is trying to take full control of the Donbas, comprised of two eastern provinces Moscow claims on behalf of separatists. "The occupiers shelled more than 40 towns in Donetsk and Luhansk region, destroying or damaging 47 civilian sites, including 38 homes and a school. As a result of this shelling five civilians died and 12 were wounded," the Joint Task Force of Ukraine's armed forces said on Facebook.

10:03 a.m. South Korea's central bank continues to tighten policy in the face of soaring inflation, raising its key interest rate by 25 basis points to 1.75% on Thursday. The Bank of Korea's second straight hike came in the first meeting under new Gov. Rhee Chang-yong, the International Monetary Fund's former Asia-Pacific director who took the helm of the bank last month.

Local Residents Gather Outside Their Heavily Damaged House After a Russian Strike in Pokrovsk, Eastern Ukraine on May 25. © AP

9:14 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin has issued an order to fast track Russian citizenship for residents of parts of southern Ukraine largely held by his forces, while lawmakers in Moscow passed a bill to strengthen the stretched Russian army. Putin's decree applying to the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions could allow Russia to strengthen its hold on territory that lies between eastern Ukraine, where Moscow-backed separatists occupy some areas, and the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia seized in 2014.

4:16 a.m. World Bank President David Malpass suggests that Russia's war in Ukraine and its impact on food and

energy prices -- as well as the availability of fertilizer -- could trigger a global recession. "As we look at the global GDP ... it's hard right now to see how we avoid a recession," Malpass says at an event in Washington hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The Ukraine War's Impact on Food and Energy Prices Poses a Risk to the Global Economy, the Head of the World Bank Says. © Reuters

12:40 a.m. The head of Russia's lower parliamentary house has slammed Japan as an "unfriendly nation" that is benefiting from its interests in the Sakhalin-2 energy project.

Vyacheslav Volodin, the chairman of the State Duma, singles out Japan, the U.K. and the Netherlands for receiving "huge profits" from the Sakhalin-2 oil and gas project in Russia's Far East, according to an article on the Duma's website.

He insists stakes in the project held by companies in those countries should be sold to Russia's state-owned energy company Gazprom or to enterprises from friendly nations.

Japanese resources traders Mitsui & Co. and Mitsubishi Corp. own 12.5% and 10% of Sakhalin-2, respectively. Gazprom owns about 50% while U.K.-based Shell controls roughly 27.5%. Read more.

An Tanker Loaded With Liquefied Natural Gas From Russia's Sakhalin-2 Project Arrives at a Japanese Terminal. © Kyodo

Friday, May 27

9:00 p.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says he will participate remotely in the Group of 20 economies' summit to be held in November in Bali, Indonesia.

In an online speech hosted by the Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia, the wartime leader urges pro-Russian elements to not blame Ukraine for wanting to join NATO.

Zelenskyy does not mention Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's decision to also invite Russian President Vladimir Putin to the summit. But he asks "politicians, diplomats of the world's biggest economies" to "join forces"

to stop Russia's aggression, "rather than supporting the Russian Federation and its businesses, rather than continuing trading with them." Read more.

Jokowi held a call with Zelenskyy in late April, and the Ukrainian leader said then that he appreciated the president's invitation to the event. Indonesia holds the rotating presidency of the G-20 this year.

7:00 p.m. Sweden intends to increase defense spending to at least 2% of its gross domestic product by 2028, Swedish Finance Minister Mikael Damberg said in a May 25 interview with Nikkei. The country currently spends about 1.3% of its GDP on defense.

Sweden has applied to join NATO, which requests that member states spend at least 2% of GDP on defense. Sweden will increase its spending to that level over the next six years. Read more.

3:00 p.m. At Nikkei's Future of Asia conference, former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad warns of the risk of escalation following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"I am afraid that wars have a habit of beginning small and then grow into world wars," he says on Day 2 of the event in Tokyo. Read more.

The Superyacht Amadea Docked in Fiji on April 15. The U.S. Has Won the Latest Round of a Legal Battle To Seize the $325 Million Russian-Owned Vessel. © Reuters

2:11 p.m. The U.S. has won the latest round of a legal battle to seize a $325 million Russian-owned superyacht in Fiji, with the case now appearing to be heading to the Pacific nation's top court. The case highlights the thorny legal ground the U.S. finds itself on as it tries to seize assets of Russian oligarchs around the world. Those intentions are welcomed by many governments and citizens who oppose the war in Ukraine, but some actions are raising questions about how far U.S. jurisdiction extends. Fiji's Court of Appeal on Friday dismissed an appeal by Feizal Haniff, who represents the company that legally owns the superyacht Amadea.

7:06 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy complains about divisions inside the European Union over more sanctions against Russia and asks why some nations were being allowed to block the plan. The EU is discussing a sixth round of punitive measures, including an embargo on

Russian oil imports. Such a move requires unanimity but Hungary opposes the idea for now on the grounds its economy would suffer too much. "How many more weeks will the European Union try to agree on a sixth package?" Zelenskyy said in a late night address, noting that Russia was receiving a billion euros a day from the 27-nation bloc for energy supplies.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in a Late-Night Call on May 27, Complained About Delays in European Union Efforts To Implement a Fresh Round of Economic Sanctions Against Russia. © Reuters

4:00 a.m. The new owner of McDonald's restaurants in Russia, Alexander Govor, plans to start rebranding them next month, Russian media report. "We can confirm that we're striving to open for our guests on June 12," Interfax and Tass quote a statement from the chain's press service as saying. "We'll present the updated brand separately in the near future," the statement adds.

3:40 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi hold a phone call on

developments in the Ukraine war and on efforts to ease the ongoing food crisis, Rome says in a statement. Moscow says of the call, "Vladimir Putin emphasized that the Russian Federation is ready to make a significant contribution to overcoming the food crisis through the export of grain and fertilizers, provided that politically motivated restrictions from the West are lifted."

Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Has Disrupted Grain and Flour Production, Including at This Mill in the Chernihiv Region. © Reuters

1:20 a.m. The U.S. remains focused on the long-term threat China poses to the international order, even as the war in Ukraine draws global attention, Secretary of State Antony Blinken says in a speech laying out the Biden administration's policy toward Beijing. "Even as President Putin's war continues, we will remain focused on the most serious long-term challenge to the international order, and that's posed by [China]," says Blinken at the Asia Society Policy Institute in Washington. "China's the only country with both the intent to reshape the international order and

increasingly the economic, diplomatic, military and technological power to do it," he adds. Read more.

Saturday, May 28

8:30 p.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin tells French and German leaders that Russia was willing to discuss ways to make it possible for Ukraine to resume shipments of grain from Black Sea ports, the Kremlin says. Russia and Ukraine account for nearly a third of global wheat supplies, while Russia is also a main global fertilizer exporter and Ukraine is a major exporter of corn and sunflower oil.

"For its part, Russia is ready to help find options for the unhindered export of grain, including the export of Ukrainian grain from Black Sea ports," the Kremlin says.

4:15 p.m. Russian forces intensify their assault on the Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk after claiming to have captured the nearby rail hub of Lyman, pressing their offensive in the eastern Donbas.

Russian gains in recent days indicate a shift in momentum in the war, now in its fourth month. The invading forces appear close to seizing all of the Luhansk region of Donbas, a main Kremlin war goal, despite Ukrainian resistance.

Sunday, May 29

11:30 p.m. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said talks with Finland and Sweden about their joining NATO were not at the "expected level" and Ankara cannot say yes to "terrorism-supporting" countries, state broadcaster TRT Haber reported on Sunday. Turkey has objected to Sweden and Finland joining the Western defense alliance, holding up a deal that would allow for a historic enlargement following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "For as long as

Tayyip Erdogan is the head of the Republic of Turkey, we definitely cannot say 'yes' to countries which support terrorism entering NATO," he was cited as telling reporters on his return from a trip to Azerbaijan on Saturday.

People Wait To Buy Kerosene at a Fuel Station in Colombo on May 18. © Reuters

1:19 a.m. Sri Lanka agrees to buy 90,000 tons of Russian oil docked at Colombo's port for weeks for $72 million, the energy minister says, as the nation works to restart its only refinery and address a crippling energy crisis.

"I have reached out to multiple countries, including Russia, for support to import crude and other petroleum products," Reuters quotes Power and Energy Minister Kanchana Wijesekera as saying.

Monday, May 30

4:05 p.m. Russia appears to have suffered devastating losses of mid- and junior-ranking officers in its invasion of Ukraine, raising the prospect of weaker military effectiveness in the future, Britain's defense ministry says. Brigade and battalion commanders have likely been deployed to the most dangerous positions while junior officers have led low-level tactical actions, the ministry says.

"With multiple credible reports of localized mutinies amongst Russia's forces in Ukraine, a lack of experienced and credible platoon and company commanders is likely to result (in) a further decrease in morale and continued poor discipline," it says.

Barley Is Loaded Into a Ship at a Ukrainian Agricultural Exporter's Shipment Terminal in the Southern Ukrainian City of Nikolaev. © Reuters

3:00 p.m. The Russian-controlled Ukrainian region of Kherson has begun exporting grain that was harvested last year to Russia, the TASS news agency cited a senior local official as saying. "We have space to store (the new crop) although we have a lot of grain here. People are now partially taking it out, having agreed with those who buy it from the Russian side," said Kirill Stremousov, deputy head of the Military-Civilian Administration.

2:41 p.m. French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Catherine Colonna will meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv later on Monday to express

France's solidarity with Ukraine and offer more support for the country, the French foreign affairs ministry says. Colonna's trip to Ukraine comes amid criticism from some diplomats and political analysts that France is not doing enough to support Ukraine in its fight with Russia.

A Resident Takes In All That's Left of Bakhmut, a Town in the Donetsk Region of Ukraine, on May 29, 2022. © Reuters

7:00 a.m. Russian forces intensified their attacks with barrages of heavy artillery to capture a key Ukrainian city in the southeastern region of Donbas, whose full takeover Moscow's top diplomat said was now an "unconditional priority." Constant Russian shelling has destroyed all of the critical infrastructure in Sievierodonetsk, the largest city Ukraine still controls in Luhansk, one of the regions in Donbas, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says, pledging to do everything to hold off the advance. "Some 90% of buildings are damaged. More than two-thirds of the city's housing stock has been completely destroyed. There is no telecommunication," he said in a televised speech.

"Capturing Sievierodonetsk is a fundamental task for the occupiers ... We do all we can to hold this advance," he added.

Tuesday, May 31

9:52 p.m. A Ukrainian court sentences two captured Russian soldiers to 11 and a half years in jail for shelling a town in eastern Ukraine, the second war crimes verdict since the start of Russia's invasion in February.

Alexander Bobikin and Alexander Ivanov, described as an artillery driver and a gunner, acknowledged being part of an artillery unit that fired at targets in the Kharkiv region with

Grad missiles from Russia's Belgorod region. The shelling destroyed critical infrastructure and houses but caused no casualties. They were captured after crossing the border and continuing the shelling.

Rolls of Steel Are Stacked Aboard the RM 3 Cargo Ship at the Port of Mariupol, Ukraine, on May 30. Authorities in Kyiv Described the Shipment as Looting. © Reuters

4:30 p.m. A ship has left the Ukrainian port of Mariupol for the first time since Russia took the city and is headed east to Russia with a load of metal, the Russian-backed separatist leader of the Ukrainian breakaway region of Donetsk says. Ukraine says the shipment of metal to Russia from Mariupol, whose capture gave Moscow an overland bridge linking mainland Russia and pro-Russian separatist territory to annexed-Crimea, amounts to looting. "Today 2,500 tons of hot-rolled sheets left the port of Mariupol," Denis Pushilin, the leader of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, wrote on the Telegram messaging app. "The ship [is] headed for [the Russian city of] Rostov."

3:00 p.m. The China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has changed the host of its annual meeting this fall from Russia to the AIIB headquarters in Beijing. The meeting will be conducted online. It is believed that the decision was swayed by international public opinion, including the economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and Europe in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The seventh annual meeting is scheduled for Oct. 26 and 27. Read more.

European Union Moves To Restrict Imports of Russian Oil Pushed Futures Prices Higher on May 31, Amid Market Fears of Tighter Supplies Ahead of the Peak Driving Season in the U.S. And Europe. © Reuters

1:37 p.m. Oil prices extend gains after the European Union agreed to slash oil imports from Russia, fueling worries of a tighter market already strained for supply amid rising demand ahead of the peak U.S. and European summer driving season. Brent crude for July, which expires on Tuesday, rose $1.13 to a fresh two-month peak of $122.80 a barrel at 0359 GMT. The more active August contract rose $1.34 to $118.94. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures were trading at $118.25 a barrel, up $3.18 from Friday's close.

11:03 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says the Russian blockade of Ukrainian seaports prevents Kyiv from exporting 22 million tons of grain. In his nightly address, Zelenskyy said the result is the threat of famine in countries dependent on the grain and could create a new migration crisis. He charges that "this is something the Russian leadership clearly seeks."

9:14 a.m. European Union leaders agree to embargo most Russian oil imports into the bloc by year-end as part of new sanctions on Moscow worked out at a summit focused on helping Ukraine with a long-delayed package of new financial support. The embargo covers Russian oil brought in by sea, allowing a temporary exemption for imports delivered by pipeline, a move that was crucial to bring landlocked Hungary on board. The agreement covers more than two-thirds of oil imports from Russia, EU Council President Charles Michel says. Ursula Von der Leyen, the head of the EU's executive branch, said the punitive move will "effectively cut around 90% of oil imports from Russia to the EU by the end of the year."

1:49 a.m. Starting today GasTerra will no longer receive gas from Russia's Gazprom due to its refusal to agree to Moscow's demands for payment in rubles, the two companies say. GasTerra, which buys and trades gas on behalf of the Dutch government, said it had contracted elsewhere for the 2 billion cu. meters of gas it had expected to receive from Gazprom through October. The company is 50% owned by Dutch government entities and 25% each by Shell and Exxon. "We understand GasTerra's decision not to agree to Gazprom's unilaterally imposed payment conditions," Dutch Energy Minister Rob Jetten wrote on Twitter. "This decision will have no consequences for the physical delivery of gas to Dutch households."

12:36 a.m. The U.S. will not send Ukraine rocket systems that can reach into Russia, President Joe Biden says, as Kyiv pushes for longer-range weapons, including the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), which can fire a barrage of rockets hundreds of kilometers away.

Biden did not rule out providing any specific weapons system, but instead appeared to be placing conditions on how they could be used. Biden and his team are working on a new package of military equipment expected to be announced in the coming days.

Wednesday, June 1

11:00 p.m. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says the supply of U.S. advanced rocket launchers to Ukraine raises the risks of a "third country" being dragged into the conflict. Lavrov responded to a reporter's question in Saudi Arabia about American plans to provide Ukraine with advanced rocket systems that can strike with precision at long-range Russian targets.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov: Moscow Views U.S. Military Aid to Ukraine "Extremely Negatively." © Reuters

4:42 p.m. Russia harshly criticizes a U.S. decision to supply advanced rocket systems and munitions to Ukraine, saying that it would increase the risk of a direct confrontation. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told state news agency RIA Novosti that Moscow views U.S. military aid to Ukraine "extremely negatively." Ryabkov singled out U.S. plans to supply Kyiv with its High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), a multiple rocket launcher system that Washington said it would supply to Ukraine as part of its latest military aid package.

3:16 p.m. Russian manufacturing activity expanded in May after three months of contraction and price pressures eased notably, but sanctions continued to dent client demand, a survey shows. The S&P Global Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose to 50.8 from 48.2 the previous month, climbing above the 50 mark that separates expansion from contraction for the first time since January. "Slower declines

in output, new orders, employment and stocks of purchases all helped to boost the seasonally adjusted PMI," S&P Global, which compiles the index, said. "Longer lead times, ordinarily a sign of improving demand conditions but driven by sanctions and logistics delays here, also contributed positively to the latest index reading." Despite the increase in the main PMI index, actual manufacturing output continued to fall in May, S&P Global said.

2:37 p.m. Swiss financial market supervisor FINMA extended through August a ban on the Swiss arm of Russia's largest lender from making payments and transactions, as well as other measures designed to protect creditors. FINMA imposed the measures on Sberbank (Switzerland) AG on March 4 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "The measures will remain in place until 2 August 2022 owing to heightened international sanctions and the continuing risks for the bank's liquidity situation," FINMA said in a statement.

The U.S. Has Decided To Supply a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System to Ukraine. © Reuters

10:27 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden has agreed to provide Ukraine with advanced rocket systems that can strike with precision at long-range Russian targets as part of a $700 million weapons package expected to be unveiled on Wednesday.

6:26 a.m. Russia has taken control of most of the eastern industrial city of Sievierodonetsk, a bombed-out wasteland whose capture Moscow has made the principal objective of its invasion, said the governor of the province of Luhansk, Serhiy Gaidai.

Russia's all-out assault on the city has been met by tough resistance from Ukrainian forces. Russian-backed separatists in Luhansk acknowledged that capturing the city was taking longer than hoped, despite one of the biggest ground attacks of the three-month-long war.

After failing to capture the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, and being driven out of northern Ukraine, a Russian victory in Sievierodonetsk and in Lysychansk, on the other side of the Siverskyi Donets River, would bring full control of Luhansk, one of two eastern provinces that Moscow claims on behalf of separatists.

3:06 a.m. Washington is prepared to give "comfort letters" to shipping and insurance companies to facilitate exports of Russian grain and fertilizer, says Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. She notes that Russian grain and fertilizer are not under U.S. sanctions but that "companies are a little nervous, and we're prepared to give them comfort letters if that will help to encourage them."

3:00 a.m. In a widening of Russia's restrictions on the flow of natural gas to Europe, Gazprom will turn off supplies to Shell Energy in Germany after the latter refused to pay in rubles.

Gazprom's move represents the first formal cut in gas supplies to Germany by Russia, the Financial Times reports.

2:55 a.m. A United Nations official had "constructive discussions" on smoothing the way for Russian grain and fertilizer exports to global markets, U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric says.

Rebeca Grynspan, the secretary-general of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, was in Moscow for the talks. Her discussions "focused on facilitating Russian grain and fertilizers to global markets with the key aim of addressing the growing global food insecurity, and Sudan just being one example that we flagged today," Dujarric says.

Grynspan "is in Washington today to meet with U.S. officials," he adds.

12:45 a.m. Accusing Russia of playing "hunger games" by blocking Ukrainian food exports, Ukraine's foreign minister tweets that work is underway on "an international UN-led operation with navies of partners ensuring a safe trade route with no security risks."

Kuleba does not elaborate on what this operation would entail.

12:00 a.m. Russia's economy will shrink less sharply that expected this year, a Reuters poll shows, with the average forecast among 18 analysts polled in late May pointing to a 7.6% contraction. A similar poll in late April predicted a contraction of 8.4%.

Thursday, June 2

11:31 p.m. OPEC and allies have agreed to increase oil production in July and August by 650,000 barrels a day in both months, up from planned increases of around 400,000, after the U.S. presses key producer Saudi Arabia to help ease rising crude prices. Read more.

10:00 p.m. Frozen assets of the Central Bank of Russia should be seized and given to Ukraine, Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins tells Nikkei in an interview.

"Russia is destroying Ukraine, so we need to take Russia's assets" for reconstruction, Karins says.

"We need to move forward and coordinate, all of Europe, America and Japan," he says. The issue will likely be on the agenda of the June European Union leaders' summit and the Group of Seven leaders' meeting. Read more.

9:32 p.m. Ukraine has raised its main interest rate to a seven-year high of 25%, up from 10%, tightening monetary policy for the first time since the Russian invasion to tackle double-digit inflation and protect its currency the hryvnia as some business activity resumes amid widespread economic damage.

6:28 p.m. Ukraine is working with international partners to create a United Nations-backed mission to restore Black Sea shipping routes and export Ukrainian farm produce, foreign ministry spokesman Oleg Nikolenko says. Russia has captured some of Ukraine's biggest seaports and its navy controls major transport routes in the Black Sea, blocking Ukrainian shipments and deepening a global food crisis. "We call on countries whose food security may suffer more from Russian aggression against Ukraine to use their contacts with Moscow to force it to lift the blockade of Ukrainian seaports and end the war," Nikolenko wrote on Facebook.

3:56 p.m. Oil prices fall as investors cash in on a recent rally ahead of a key producers meeting later in the day, with some speculation that Saudi Arabia may boost oil production in response to urging by the United States. Brent crude was down $2.07, or 1.8%, at $114.22 a barrel at 0649 GMT, having risen 0.6% the previous day. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude dropped $2.21, or 1.9%, to $113.05 a barrel, after a 0.5% rise on Wednesday.

2:50 p.m. Novartis is resuming business in Ukraine after reviewing how safe it was to operate in the country that Russia invaded in February, the Swiss drugmaker says. "After studying current safety protocols in the country, and on advice which we will regularly review, we have begun to resume business operations remotely to help the war-torn

country restore some basic critical business processes," Novartis said on its website in a post dated June 1. "The safety and security of our people remains our No. 1 objective, and we will constantly review the situation and our business operations in Ukraine."

9:06 a.m. A Russian missile hit rail lines in the western Lviv region, a key conduit for Western weapons and other supplies, officials say. Lviv region Gov. Maksym Kozytskyy said five people were wounded in the strike, adding that more information would be available later in the day. Anton Gerashchenko, an adviser to the country's interior minister, said the Russians hit the Beskidy railway tunnel in the Carpathian Mountains in an apparent effort to cut a key railway link and disrupt shipments of weapons and fuel.

Members of the Social Liberal Party Celebrate the Initial Results of the Referendum About the Denmark's Participation in the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy on June 1. (Ritzau Scanpix/Claus Bech via Reuters)

7:00 a.m. Denmark will join the European Union's defense policy after a referendum on Wednesday, final results show,

signaling the latest shift among Nordic countries to deepen defense ties in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Denmark is the only EU member that is not part of the bloc's defense and security policy. Final results show almost 67% of voters were in favor of removing an opt-out to the EU's so-called Common Security and Defense Policy. By joining the policy, Denmark would be able to take part in joint military operations, such as those in Somalia, Mali and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to cooperate on the acquisition of joint military capabilities.

6:15 a.m. Ukraine's national soccer team scores a 3-1 win over Scotland in a vital World Cup playoff game, bringing a moment of joy to the country. The victory, in their first game since the war began, keeps Ukraine in the running to reach the finals. Ukraine will now face Wales on Sunday with the winner advancing to the finals. "Thank you guys! Two hours of happiness, something we have become unaccustomed to," President Zelenskyy says in an online post.

5:00 a.m. The Biden administration plans to sell drones to Ukraine that can be equipped with missiles for combat use, Reuters reports, citing people familiar with the matter.

1:10 a.m. Russia's failure to pay nearly $1.9 million in interest on a sovereign bond constitutes a "credit event," a panel of investors says, as the country teeters on the edge of a formal default. A "credit event" would allow investors to collect a payout on default insurance known as credit default swaps. Read more.

Friday, June 3

6:00 p.m. The European Union formally approves an embargo on Russian oil and other sanctions targeting major banks and broadcasters. EU headquarters said Russian crude oil will be phased out over six months, and other refined petroleum products over eight months. It said that "a temporary exception is foreseen" for landlocked countries -- like Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia -- that "suffer from a specific dependence on Russian supplies and have no viable alternative options."

5:00 p.m. Ukraine does not plan to use multiple-launch rocket systems it receives from the U.S. to attack facilities in Russia, a Ukrainian presidential adviser says. "Ukraine is waging a defensive war and does not plan to use the MLRS to attack facilities in Russia," Mykhailo Podolyak said in a

Twitter post. "Our partners know where their weapons are used."

A Russian Pacific Fleet Vessel Visits the Chinese Port of Qingdao in This File Photo. More Than 40 Ships From the Fleet Will Conduct Exercises in the Coming Week Amid the War in Ukraine. © Reuters

11:30 a.m. Russia's Pacific Fleet launches a weeklong series of exercises with more than 40 ships and up to 20 aircraft taking part. Russian news agencies quote the defense ministry as saying the exercises, taking place from June 3 to 10, will involve, among other matters, "groups of ships together with naval aviation taking part in search operations for (enemy) submarines."

8:21 a.m. The United States and its allies are vowing to hold Russia accountable for crimes committed by its forces since they invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24. At a U.N. Security Council meeting held Thursday on strengthening accountability and justice for serious violations of international law, U.S. Undersecretary of State Uzra Zeya said Russian forces have bombed maternity hospitals, train

stations, apartment buildings and homes and even killed civilians cycling down the street. Zeya said the United States is working with its allies to support a broad range of international investigations into atrocities in Ukraine.

3:04 a.m. The U.S. issues new sanctions to punish Russia for its invasion of Ukraine, with targets including several yachts linked to President Vladimir Putin. The State Department imposed sanctions on five Russian oligarchs, including Alexey Mordashov and his companies, such as steel producer Severstal and gold miner Nord Gold.

Another target is Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Maria Zakharova.

The Biden administration also added Sergei Roldugin, a cellist and conductor already under European Union sanctions for his links to Putin, to its list of sanctioned individuals, saying Roldugin was "part of a system that manages President Putin's offshore wealth." The order freezes Roldugin's U.S. assets and bars American individuals from dealing with them.

A Ukrainian Tank Near a Front Line. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Says Russia Occupies One-Fifth of the Country, With Fighting Raging From Kharkiv in the Northeast to Mykolaiv in the South. © Reuters

12:40 a.m. Russia currently occupies about 20% of Ukraine's territory, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says in a video address to Luxembourg's parliament.

"We have to defend ourselves against almost the entire Russian army. All combat-ready Russian military formations are involved in this aggression," he said, adding that the front lines of battle stretched across more than 1,000 km.

More sophisticated and powerful weapons from the U.S. and Germany are expected to arrive in Ukraine soon amid the intense fighting and heavy losses being suffered by both sides.

12:10 a.m. A desperate and cash-strapped Sri Lanka is turning to Russia for cheap oil, while much of the world shuns Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine.

Trapped in the worst economic crisis in its history, the South Asian country said last weekend that it would pay $72 million for 90,000 tons of Russian crude ordered via a Dubai-based company and docked at Colombo for weeks. Sri Lanka's first purchase of Russian oil since the outbreak of the war in Europe gave a new lease of life to a refinery in Sapugaskanda, just outside the commercial capital, which had been shut since March.

It also highlighted how the country's woes have given Russia an opening. Sri Lanka has kicked off discussions with Moscow about directly importing crude oil, although it is unclear where the funds for such shipments would come from. Read more.

Saturday, June 4

8:52 p.m. Pope Francis says he will meet soon with Ukrainian officials to discuss the possibility of a visit to their country. Francis disclosed the coming meeting in a question-and-answer session with children in one of the Vatican's main courtyards.

3:05 a.m. Ukrainian forces recapture about 20% of the territory they lost in the city of Sievierodonetsk, the head of the eastern region of Luhansk says. "Whereas before the situation was difficult, the percentage (held by Russia) was somewhere around 70%, now we have already pushed them back by approximately 20%," Serhiy Gaidai says.

Sunday, June 5

6:14 p.m. Russian strikes destroyed tanks and other armored vehicles on the outskirts of Kyiv that had been provided to Ukraine by European countries, Russia's defense ministry says on Sunday. The ministry's statement comes after the Ukrainian capital is rocked by several explosions early on Sunday.

5:21 p.m. President Vladimir Putin warns the West that Russia will strike new targets if the United States starts supplying Ukraine with longer-range missiles, Tass news agency reports on Sunday.

If such missiles are supplied, "we will strike at those targets which we have not yet been hitting," Putin is quoted as saying in an interview on Rossiya-1 state television channel.

The Yamal-Europe Pipeline Carries Russian Natural Gas to Poland and Germany Through Belarus. © Reuters

3:30 a.m. Western sanctions will have no effect on Russia's oil exports, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says, as he predicts a big jump in profits from energy shipments this year. "Considering the price level that has been established as a result of the West's policies, we have suffered no budgetary losses," he is quoted by Tass news agency as saying. "On the contrary, this year we will significantly increase the profits from the export of our energy resources."

Monday, June 6

6:47 p.m. Sales of new cars in Russia in May slid 83.5% year on year to 24,268 vehicles, the Association of European Businesses (AEB) says. The AEB said in April that it expected new car sales in Russia to fall by at least 50% in 2022 as the country's automobile market grapples with supply issues.

4:10 p.m. Explosions were heard on Monday in the southern Ukrainian city of Mykolaiv, Mayor Oleksandr Senkevych says in a post on the Telegram messaging service.

10:30 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Sunday he had traveled to Lysychansk and Soledar, two cities very close to some of the most intense fighting between his country's troops and Russian forces. The beleaguered city of Lysychansk is just a few kilometers south of Sievierodonetsk, where one of the war's biggest battles is taking place and which Ukraine claims to be regaining more control of. "I went with the head of (my) office to the east. We were in Lysychansk and Soledar," Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address, adding he would not elaborate on the visit.

8:00 a.m. Russian aluminum producer Rusal is suing Rio Tinto, seeking to restore access to its 20% share of the alumina produced at a jointly-owned refiner in Queensland, according to Australian media. Rusal alleges Rio had no right to take full control of Queensland Alumina following Australia's sanctions on Russia over its actions in Ukraine, The Australian newspaper said in a report citing filings in the Australian Federal Court.

Foreign Volunteers Fighting for Ukraine Take Up Defensive Positions in the Country's Eastern Donbas Region: Ukrainian Officials Say Their Forces Have Recaptured Part of Sievierodonetsk From Russian Troops. © Reuters

4:54 a.m. Ukrainian officials say a counterattack in the country's east has led to the recapture of a section of the city of Sievierodonetsk from Russian forces, Reuters reports Britain's Defense Ministry as saying. Luhansk regional Governor Serhiy Gaidai says Ukraine now controls about half of Sievierodonetsk, which previously was lost to the Russian invasion during fighting in the Donbas.

The development comes after Russia struck Kyiv with missiles for the first time in over a month. Cruise missiles were fired from the Caspian Sea, striking a rail car facility in the Ukrainian capital, Ukraine's army and railway chief says. Moscow says it destroyed tanks sent by Eastern European countries. At least one person was hospitalized in Kyiv and there are no immediate reports of death, according to Reuters.

3:00 a.m. Wales ends their 64-year wait for a place in the World Cup finals as they beat Ukraine 1-0 on Sunday to end the war-torn nation's hopes of reaching Qatar. An own goal from Ukraine winger Andriy Yarmolenko, who headed a Gareth Bale free kick into his own net, decided the contest.

2:33 a.m. A Russian general was killed in eastern Ukraine, according to a Russian state media journalist. The Russian defense ministry has not yet commented on a report Sunday that Major General Roman Kutuzov has died. State television reporter Alexander Sadako published the report on the messaging app Telegram, but has not said when or where Kutuzov was killed.

Tuesday, June 7

11:45 p.m. The World Bank has cut its forecast for global economic growth this year to 2.9%, down 1.2 percentage points from its January estimate, and warned of the risk of stagflation.

The real GDP growth outlook for the eurozone, which bears much of the impact of the war in Ukraine, has been slashed by 1.7 points to 2.5%. Forecasts for the U.S. and Japan are downgraded 1.2 points to 2.5% and 1.7%. The outlook for emerging market and developing economies has been cut by 1.2 points to 3.4%

"Even if a global recession is averted, the pain of stagflation could persist for several years -- unless major supply increases are set in motion," World Bank Group President David Malpass writes in the foreword of the Global Economic Prospects report.

8:35 p.m. The U.S. should push back against China's efforts to expand its sphere of influence by creating a "Pacific NATO," a senator proposes.

Sen. Ben Sasse, a Republican from Nebraska known as a prominent critic of Donald Trump, has blasted both the former president and the current Biden administration as "weak isolationists."

"Let's build a NATO for the Pacific," Sasse said in a recent speech. "We need allies to get back on the offensive against the CCP, and those allies need U.S. leadership," he said, referring to the Chinese Communist Party. Read more.

Russia's Invasion of Ukraine in February Halted the Country's Black Sea Grain Exports, Causing a Global Food Crisis, Which a United Nations-Led Plan Is Now Seeking To Address. © Reuters

7:00 p.m. As Ukraine's wheat attracts worldwide attention for its role in the global food supply, bakeries in the war-torn country are locked in their own struggle closer to home.

Located about 100 km east of Kyiv, Zgurivka is just one of the battlefronts where Ukrainian and Russian forces have faced off.

As Russian troops advanced on the village in March, wheat farmer Olexander Chubuk sent his grain to be ground into flour and on to a local bakery. "Residents were afraid of running out of bread. That was their biggest concern," Chubuk said.

The 60 workers at the village bakery supplied by Chubuk and other farmers understood. They stayed, working nonstop every day to deliver bread to 25,000 people in the village and the surrounding area. Read more.

6:00 p.m. Turkey is coordinating closely with Russia and Ukraine to agree on a plan that would restart grain exports from Ukrainian ports even as conflict rages elsewhere in the country, Defense Minister Hulusi Akar says. The United Nations-driven plan would open a safe shipping corridor to address a global food crisis brought on by Russia's invasion in February, which halted Ukraine's Black Sea grain exports. Akar said the four sides were working out how mines floating off the port of Odesa and elsewhere along Ukraine's coast would be cleared and by whom, and who would safeguard the corridor. "We are making efforts to conclude this as soon as possible," he told reporters.

5:42 p.m. The Belarusian armed forces have begun taking part in combat readiness training, the country's defense ministry says. Belarus is a close ally of Russia and allowed it to launch the northern prong of its Feb. 24 attack on Ukraine from Belarusian territory.

4:11 p.m. The bodies of some Ukrainian fighters killed defending the city of Mariupol from Russian forces at a vast steelworks have been handed over to Kyiv, the families of Ukraine's Azov unit of the national guard say. Ukrainian forces defending Mariupol were holed up in the Azovstal steelworks for weeks as Russian forces tried to capture the city. The Ukrainian soldiers eventually surrendered last month and were taken into custody by Russian forces.

10:30 a.m. Japan will freeze the assets of two more Russian banks -- Credit Bank of Moscow and Russian Agricultural Bank (Rosselkhozbank) -- as part of additional sanctions on Russia after its invasion of Ukraine, Japan's foreign ministry says. Japan added one more Belarusian bank to the sanction list, Belinvestbank (Belarusian Bank for Development and Reconstruction), the ministry says.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen Is Among 61 American Citizens Newly Sanctioned by Russia. © Reuters

4:25 a.m. Russia has added 61 American citizens to a list of people barred from entering the country in retaliation for U.S. sanctions, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They include Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen, Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm, and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai.

2:00 a.m. American authorities have obtained warrants to seize two U.S.-origin planes owned by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich, Reuters reports, citing a Department of Justice official.

The warrants were issued for flying to Russia without a license required by U.S. sanctions imposed on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine.

New Car Sales in Russia in May Are Down Drastically From a Year Ago, According to the Association of European Businesses. © Reuters

Wednesday, June 8

9:50 p.m. Ukraine and Russia each hand over the bodies of 50 deceased soldiers in an exchange that includes 37 Ukrainian fighters killed at Mariupol's Azovstal steelworks, the Ukrainian Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories says.

The exchange takes place on the front lines in the southeast Ukrainian region of Zaporizhzhia, the ministry says, adding that such exchanges are expected to continue.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Said, "We Have To Achieve a Full De-Occupation of our Entire Territory" at an Event Hosted by Britain's Financial Times Newspaper. © AP

12:10 p.m. Ukrainian forces struggled to hold their ground in bloody street-to-street fighting in the eastern front-line city of Sievierodonetsk. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the situation was difficult but also pledged to retake Russia's gains. The dayslong battle for the industrial city has emerged as pivotal, with Russia focusing its offensive might

in the hope of achieving one of its stated aims: to fully capture surrounding Luhansk Province on behalf of Russian-speaking separatists. "We have to achieve a full de-occupation of our entire territory," Zelenskyy said by video link at an event hosted by Britain's Financial Times newspaper on Tuesday.

10:25 a.m. Under heavy pressure from Western sanctions and airspace bans, Russian flagship airline Aeroflot plans to raise up to 185.2 billion rubles ($3 billion) in an emergency share issue. Aeroflot, controlled by the Russian state, said shareholders at its annual meeting had approved the issuance of 5.42 billion new shares that could be bought at a price of 34.29 rubles each under an open subscription. The airline also plans to order 300 aircraft from United Aircraft, majority-owned by Rostec, Russia's state aerospace and defense conglomerate, reported the Vedemosti business newspaper.

7:56 a.m. The World Bank's executive board approves $1.49 billion of additional financing for Ukraine to help pay wages for government and social workers, expanding the bank's total pledged support to over $4 billion. The World Bank says in a statement that the latest funding is supported by financing guarantees from Britain, the Netherlands, Lithuania and Latvia. The project is also being supported by parallel financing from Italy and contributions from a new multidonor trust fund.

4:12 a.m. Radiation detectors in the 30-km exclusion zone around Ukraine's long-defunct Chernobyl nuclear power plant are back online for the first time since Russia seized the area on Feb. 24, and radiation levels are normal, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog says.

"Most of the 39 detectors sending data from the Exclusion Zone ... are now visible on the IRMIS [International Radiation Monitoring Information System] map and updated as they were before the interruption," the International Atomic Energy Agency says, adding that "the measurements received so far indicated radiation levels in line with those measured before the conflict."

3:00 a.m. Stalemate is "not an option" for Ukraine in the war with Russia, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says, asserting that "victory must be achieved on the battlefield" while insisting that he is open to peace talks.

"We are inferior in terms of equipment and therefore we are not capable of advancing," he tells Financial Times editor Roula Khalaf at the Financial Times' Global Boardroom conference. "We are going to suffer more losses, and people are my priority," he says.

The governor of Luhansk Oblast in Ukraine's east, Serhiy Haidai, says in a Facebook post that Ukrainian forces are having a difficult time containing a Russian advance into the center of Sievierodonetsk but that the invaders still do not control the city.

2:00 a.m. The U.S. is "closely monitoring any efforts that we can see to circumvent our Russia-related sanctions through the use of gold," Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen tells the Senate Finance Committee in testimony on President Joe Biden's 2023 budget request.

She also calls on lawmakers to do more to help Americans cope with inflation.

Congress "can do a lot to mitigate some of the most important and burdensome costs that households face," such as a lack of affordable housing and high prescription drug prices, Yellen says.

Thursday, June 9

3:50 p.m. Russian forces have stepped up their efforts to advance to the south of the town of Izium in eastern Ukraine, likely wanting to secure further options in the region, a British military update says. "Russia's progress on the Izium axis had remained stalled since April, after Ukrainian forces made good use of the terrain to slow Russia's advance," Britain's Defense Ministry said. "Russia likely seeks to regain momentum in this area in order to put further pressure on Sieverodonetsk, and to give it the option of advancing deeper into the Donetsk Oblast."

3:02 p.m. The brutal battle for the Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk will determine the fate of the Donbas region, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says, as Russian troops lay waste to the city in an assault aimed at controlling eastern Ukraine. "This is a very brutal battle, very tough, perhaps one of the most difficult throughout this war," the president said in a video statement. "Sievierodonetsk remains the epicenter of the encounter in Donbas ... Largely, that is where the fate of our Donbas is being decided now." After failing to take control of the capital, Kyiv, the Kremlin says it is now seeking to completely "liberate" the Donbas, where Russian-backed separatists broke away from Ukrainian government control in 2014.

9:45 a.m. In many of Mariupol's buildings, workers are finding 50 to 100 bodies each, according to a mayoral aide in the Russian-held port city in southern Ukraine. Petro Andryushchenko said on the Telegram app that the bodies are being taken in an "endless caravan of death" to a morgue, landfills and other places. At least 21,000 Mariupol

civilians were killed during the weekslong Russian siege, Ukrainian authorities have estimated.

At Least 21,000 Mariupol Civilians Were Killed During the Russian Siege, Ukrainian Authorities Have Estimated, With Workers Finding 50 to 100 Bodies Each in Many Buildings. © Reuters

5:45 a.m. Ukraine's national soccer team bounces back from the disappointment of not qualifying for the World Cup by winning its first UEFA Nations League game in group play with a 1-0 victory over Ireland. Ukraine, which lost to Wales in the World Cup qualifying playoff final on Sunday, prevails in Dublin. A set-piece goal from midfielder Viktor Tsygankov clinched the three points for the war-torn nation.

3:15 a.m. China and Russia have been called on to explain at the United Nations their decision to block a U.N. Security Council draft resolution last month that would have imposed new sanctions on North Korea.

Wednesday's meeting of the U.N. General Assembly is the first of its kind, putting the onus on permanent members of the Security Council to explain their vetoes.

"Anyone who is seriously addressing the North Korean problem has long understood that it's futile to expect Pyongyang to unconditionally disarm under the threat of a spiral of sanctions [and] the creation of new military blocks in the region" Russian Deputy Ambassador Anna Evstigneeva tells the General Assembly.
Western nations "don't have any response to crisis situations other than introducing sanctions," the ambassador adds.
Chinese U.N. envoy Zhang Jun says the tensions on the Korean Peninsula are the result of "the flip-flop of U.S. policies." U.S. diplomat Jeffrey DeLaurentis calls the Russian and Chinese explanations "insufficient, not credible and not convincing."
Chinese and Russian opposition killed the draft resolution, which followed repeated North Korean ballistic missile launches this year.

China and Russia Blamed the U.S. For Tensions on the Korean Peninsula and Called for Talks Between North Korea and the Biden Administration at a U.N. General Assembly Meeting on June 8. © Reuters

2:40 a.m. American businessman and philanthropist Howard G. Buffett, son of billionaire investor Warren Buffett, has met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Friday, June 10

Gen. Micael Byden, Supreme Commander of the Swedish Armed Forces; Mark A. Milley, U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson Stand Aboard the USS Kearsarge, in Stockholm, Sweden, on June 4, 2022. © Reuters

4:30 p.m. Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde on Friday said Sweden aims to make constructive progress in talks with Turkey over the Nordic country's application to join NATO. "Our application has received broad support among NATO members," she said in a foreign policy declaration after Sweden, alongside Finland, applied last month to join the military alliance as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Our ambition is to, in a constructive spirit, make progress on the questions that Turkey has raised," she told parliament.

2:46 p.m. Ukraine's southern city of Mariupol is at risk of a major cholera outbreak as medical services are likely already near collapse, Britain's defense ministry says. There is likely also a critical shortage of medicines in Kherson, the ministry

said via Twitter. Russia is struggling to provide basic public services to the population in Russian-occupied territories, it added.

The Volodarskaya LPDS Production Facility of the Transneft Oil Pipeline's Operator in the Village of Konstantinovo Outside Moscow. © Reuters

6:00 a.m. The average price that Americans pay for gasoline is closing in on $5 a gallon, another drain on the wallets of consumers who are already paying more for many essentials. AAA said the nationwide average for regular on Thursday was $4.97 a gallon, up a quarter in just the last week and $1.90 more than drivers were paying a year ago.

4:21 a.m. Russia may be getting more revenue from its fossil fuels now than shortly before its invasion of Ukraine as global price increases offset the impact of Western efforts to restrict its sales, U.S. energy security envoy Amos Hochstein told lawmakers during a hearing on Thursday.

In response to a question about whether Moscow is making more money now off its crude oil and gas sales than a couple of months before the war started, Hochstein told the Senate Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation, "I can't deny that."

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Have Been Hit With Ukrainian Sanctions. © Reuters

2:50 a.m. President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and other key Russian figures have been hit with asset freezes and travel bans as part of new sanctions ordered by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu are also targeted, according to Zelenskyy's presidential website. Earlier, Zelenskyy told a meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that Ukraine's calls for sanctions before Russia's invasion had been ignored.

"When Ukraine warned the world about Russian preparations last year and stressed the need for tough preventive sanctions against Russia so that Moscow would at least feel that any aggression would not go unpunished, the world did not hear us," he said, according to a statement on the presidential website.
"When we said that Russia's policy of energy conquering of Europe was aimed at creating problems not only for Ukraine -- and our gas transportation system -- but also for all Europeans, it was not fully perceived by some leaders in Europe itself."

12:30 a.m. The death sentences handed down to two Britons fighting for Ukraine have been condemned by U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, who calls the verdict in a court in the self-proclaimed, Russian-backed Donetsk People's Republic a "sham judgment."
Moroccan Brahim Saadoun was also convicted of "mercenary activities and the commission of actions aimed at seizing power and overthrowing the constitutional system of the DPR," Interfax reports.

Saturday, June 11

10:40 p.m. Ukraine's state nuclear firm Energoatom says it has helped restore an internet connection between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the servers of

Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which is occupied by Russian forces. The connection to the plant's servers was lost on May 30 but had been restored as of June 10, allowing the IAEA to resume monitoring data on the control of nuclear material at the plant, Energoatom says.

A British Military Intelligence Report Says Russia Is Likely Using 1960s-Era Anti-Ship Missiles in Ground Attacks. The Missiles Are Highly Inaccurate and Can Cause Severe Collateral Damage, the Report Says. © Reuters

3:43 p.m. Russian bombers have likely been launching 1960s-era heavy, anti-ship missiles, originally meant to destroy aircraft carriers with nuclear warheads, against land targets in Ukraine, a British military intelligence report says. It said the 5.5-ton Kh-22 missiles, when used in ground attacks with conventional warheads, are highly inaccurate and can cause severe collateral damage and casualties. Russia is likely using such weapons because it is running short of more precise, modern missiles, Britain's Defense Ministry said in a daily update.

5:00 a.m. Russia is leaving the World Tourism Organization, Interfax reports, citing a directive signed by Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin.

3:30 a.m. "Russia's war against Ukraine has shattered peace in Europe and is causing enormous human suffering

and destruction," the presidents of nine Central and Eastern European NATO members say in a joint statement adopted at a summit Friday.
Presidents of the Bucharest Nine -- Hungary, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Romania -- were joined by NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg online.
"We call on Russia to change its aggressive behavior, withdraw its forces from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine, ensure accountability for war crimes and atrocities, and return to act in compliance with international law," the presidents say in the statement. "NATO should draw the necessary conclusions regarding its relations with Russia."
The NATO chief tells the summit that the alliance is working to dispatch new units to Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.
The meeting in Bucharest comes ahead of a NATO summit in Madrid at the end of June.

3:00 a.m. Cholera, dysentery and other infectious diseases have been found in Mariupol, threatening a major outbreak, the war-ravaged city's mayor, Vadym Boychenko, tells BBC Ukrainian.
Meanwhile, 100 to 200 Ukrainian soldiers a day are being killed on the front lines, the BBC quotes presidential aide Mykhailo Podolyak as saying. This is a higher death rate than the range of 60 to 100 that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has given.

Sunday, June 12

5:42 p.m. Russian forces fired Kalibr cruise missiles to destroy a large depot with U.S. and European weapons in Ukraine's Ternopil region, Interfax reports, citing the Russian defense ministry. Russian forces have also shot down three Ukrainian SU-25 fighter jets near Donetsk and Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine, Interfax quotes the Russian defense ministry as saying.

4:31 p.m. The first 15 restaurants of the former McDonald's reopen in Moscow on Sunday under new ownership and a new name, "Vkusno & tochka," which means "Tasty & that's it," the company says. Another 50 restaurants will be open on Monday, Vkusno & tochka says.

Monday, June 13

Smoke rises over Sievierodonetsk's Azot Chemical Plant, after a Russian attack on the city in Ukraine's Luhansk region on June 10. © Reuters

6:00 p.m. An industrial zone where about 500 civilians are sheltering is under heavy artillery fire from Russian forces, the regional governor says. Serhiy Gaidai, governor of the Luhansk region in eastern Ukraine that includes Sievierodonetsk, says on Facebook that Russian forces control about 70% of the city and fighting there is fierce.

11:30 a.m. Business sentiment among major Japanese companies in the April-June period was negative for the second consecutive quarter as Russia's invasion of Ukraine drove oil prices higher, government data shows. The confidence index covering firms capitalized at 1 billion yen

($7.4 million) or more logged minus 0.9, compared with minus 7.5 in the January-March period, dragged down by a plunge in auto-related manufacturers at minus 25.4, according to the joint survey by the Finance Ministry and Cabinet Office. The sector was hit by a decrease in production due to parts supply shortages. The figures are calculated by subtracting the percentage of firms reporting worsening conditions from those seeing improvements.

9:40 a.m. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says Turkey has "legitimate concerns" over terrorism and other issues that need to be taken seriously. Turkey has accused Finland and Sweden of supporting Kurdish militants and says it will not back the Nordic nations' NATO bid until they change their policies. Speaking at a joint news conference with Finnish President Sauli Niinisto, Stoltenberg stressed that "no other NATO ally has suffered more terrorist attacks than Turkey" and pointed to its strategic geographic location with neighbors like Iraq and Syria.

1:56 a.m. Russian forces have blown up a bridge linking the embattled Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk to another city across the river, cutting off a possible evacuation route for civilians, local officials say. Sievierodonetsk has become the epicenter of the battle for control over Ukraine's eastern Donbas region.

Tuesday, June 14

9:34 p.m. Russia's invasion of Ukraine will create a global wheat shortage for at least three seasons by keeping much of the Ukrainian crop from markets, Ukrainian Agriculture Minister Mykola Solskyi tells Reuters. Ukraine, known as Europe's breadbasket, has had its maritime grain export routes blocked by Russia and faces problems such as mined wheat fields and a lack of grain storage space.
"Now we are talking about three wheat harvests at the same time: We cannot take out last year's crop, we cannot harvest and take out the current one, and we do not particularly want to sow the next one," Solskyi says.

6:00 p.m. Russia has struck an artillery weapons depot with Kalibr cruise missiles in Ukraine's Chernihiv region, the RIA news agency reports, citing the Russian defense ministry. Russian air defense forces shot down a Ukrainian MiG-29 fighter jet and an Mi-24 helicopter, TASS news agency reports, citing the ministry.

4:30 p.m. The Moscow Exchange says it will suspend trading of the Swiss franc against the ruble and the dollar from Tuesday after Switzerland adopted new EU sanctions against Russia. "The suspension of operations is due to difficulties conducting settlements in Swiss francs faced by market participants and the financial sector in connection with the restrictive measures imposed by Switzerland on June 10," the Moscow Exchange said in a statement. Switzerland, which is not a member of the European Union, updated its sanctions package last Friday to match the EU's latest restrictions against businesses, banks and individuals from Russia and Belarus.

8:44 a.m. Russian forces cut off the last routes for evacuating citizens from the eastern Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk, a Ukrainian official said, as the Kremlin pushed for victory in the Donbas region. The last bridge to the city was destroyed, trapping any remaining civilians and making it impossible to deliver humanitarian supplies, said regional governor Sergei Gaidai, adding that some 70% of the city was under Russian control. Ukraine has issued increasingly urgent calls for more Western heavy weapons to help defend Sievierodonetsk, which Kyiv says could hold the key to the battle for the eastern Donbas region and the course of the war, now in its fourth month.

5:09 a.m. The main goal of Russia's military operation in Ukraine is to protect the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics, the Kremlin said after Denis Pushilin, the leader of the Russian-backed separatist Donetsk region of Ukraine, asked for additional forces from Moscow. Pushilin said earlier on Monday, "All necessary forces, including the allied ones, including the forces of the Russian Federation, will be involved in order to counter the enemy." Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted by Russia's RIA state news agency as saying, "In general, the protection of the republics is the main goal of the special military operation."

Wednesday, June 15

11:55 p.m. Russia's state-owned Gazprom says it will cut flows of natural gas to Germany through the Nord Stream pipeline for the second time in two days, blaming delays to turbine repairs.
Germany's economy minister, Robert Habeck, says the timing of the maintenance cited for Tuesday's reduction appears to be a "political decision."

11:00 p.m. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida says he will attend the NATO summit later this month, becoming the first Japanese leader to do so.
The June 29-30 gathering in Madrid will closely follow the Group of Seven summit in Germany, which Kishida will also attend.
Kishida says the Western alliance has relevance for Asia in light of the Ukraine conflict, stressing that "unilateral change to the status quo by force is not acceptable anywhere in the world." Read more.

10:45 p.m. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu

details a United Nations plan to create a sea corridor from Ukraine for grain exports, saying safe routes could be formed without needing to clear the mines around Ukrainian ports.
His comments appear to mark a shift from an earlier proposal to de-mine Ukraine's ports, a move that Kyiv fears would leave it far more vulnerable to Russian attack from the Black Sea.

8:26 p.m. Chinese President Xi Jinping told Russian President Vladimir Putin during a phone call on Wednesday that all parties should work toward resolving the crisis in Ukraine "in a responsible manner," Chinese state broadcaster CCTV reported.

7:30 p.m. NATO members are expected to agree an assistance package for Ukraine that will help it move from Soviet-era weaponry to NATO standard gear at a summit later this month, the group's Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says. "It is very much about enabling the Ukrainians to transition from Soviet-era, from old equipment to more modern NATO standard equipment," he told reporters ahead of a meeting of the alliance's defense ministers in Brussels.

11:50 a.m. The European Union's top aviation safety regulator said he is "very worried" about the safety of Western-made aircraft continuing to fly in Russia without access to spare parts and proper maintenance. The EU and the U.S. have moved to restrict Russia's access to spare parts following its invasion of Ukraine.
"This is very unsafe," Patrick Ky, executive director of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency, told reporters on the sidelines of a conference, adding regulators do not have

good data on many of the planes flying in Russia or if any have experienced safety issues in recent months.

9:38 a.m. The U.S. will build temporary silos along the border with Ukraine in a bid to help export more grain and address a growing global food crisis, President Joe Biden said. Since the Russian invasion and blockade of Ukrainian Black Sea ports, grain shipments have stalled and more than 20 million tons are stuck in silos. Ukraine says it faces a shortage of silos for a new crop. The war is stoking prices for grains, cooking oils, fuel and fertilizer. Russia and Ukraine account for nearly a third of global wheat supplies. Ukraine is also a major exporter of corn and sunflower oil and Russia a key fertilizer exporter.

Russia's Daria Kasatkina Competes at the French Open in May. © Reuters

3:11 a.m. Russian and Belarusian tennis players will be allowed to compete at the U.S. Open this year -- but only under a neutral flag, the United States Tennis Association says.

"Tennis has done much through [the] Tennis Plays for Peace [program] for humanitarian support of Ukraine," USTA President Mike McNulty says. "Unfortunately, the need for help only continues to grow. The USTA will be responding very soon with a broad set of initiatives that will include significant financial assistance and other programs to further support humanitarian relief and the people of Ukraine."

Players from Russia and Belarus are not allowed to compete at Wimbledon later this month, a move that prompted the men's ATP and women's WTA tours to strip the Grand Slam event of its ranking points.

Thursday, June 16

5:37 p.m. The leaders of Germany, France and Italy arrived in Kyiv in an overnight train in a joint demonstration of support for Ukraine, where officials were pleading for more and faster deliveries of Western arms to hold off Russia's assault. "It's an important moment. It's a message of unity we're sending to the Ukrainians," French President Emmanuel Macron said after the train pulled into the station in Kyiv.
The visit by Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi has taken weeks to organize, while all three have faced criticism from Kyiv over support viewed as tepid. Britain's Boris Johnson already visited more than two months ago. Still, the decision by the three most powerful EU leaders to travel together held strong symbolism at a pivotal moment -- a day before the EU's executive commission is expected to recommend pushing forward with Ukraine's bid to join the bloc.

11:00 a.m. Japan ran its biggest single-month trade deficit in more than eight years in May as high commodity prices and declines in the yen swelled imports, Ministry of Finance data shows. Imports soared 48.9% in the year to May, above a median market forecast for a 43.6% gain in a Reuters poll. That outpaced a 15.8% year-on-year rise in exports in the same month, resulting in a 2.385 trillion yen ($17.8 billion) trade deficit, the largest shortfall in a single month since January 2014.

Pipes of Nord Stream 1 in Germany on March 8. Further Cuts by Russia's Gazprom Mean the Pipeline Will Run at Just 40% Capacity. © Reuters

9:00 a.m. Russian Gazprom's move to cut supplies of gas to Germany is a warning signal that could cause problems for Europe's biggest economy in winter, the head of Germany's energy regulator told a newspaper. Gazprom on Wednesday announced a further cut in the amount of gas it can pump through Nord Stream 1, meaning the pipeline will run at just 40% capacity. "It would significantly worsen our situation," regulator chief Klaus Mueller told the Rheinische Post daily. "We could perhaps get through the summer as the heating season is over. But it is imperative that we fill the storage facilities to get through the winter."

4:00 a.m. Swedish furniture brand IKEA will reduce its workforce in Russia and Belarus, sell factories and close its purchase and logistics offices in Moscow and Minsk. The company paused operations in the two countries in early March, but has continued to pay salary for workers.

3:00 a.m. The Federal Reserve raises the benchmark interest rate by 75 basis points -- the largest hike since November 1994 -- in its latest move to curb the worst inflation the U.S. has faced in 40 years. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said the Fed's goal is a sustained inflation rate of 2%. "What's becoming more clear is that many factors that we don't control are going to play a very significant role in deciding whether that's possible or not. And here I'm thinking of course of commodity prices, the war in Ukraine, supply chain," Powell said at a news conference following the meeting.

2:50 a.m. Japanese budget airline ZIPAIR Tokyo says it will remove the "Z" logo from the tail of its planes. The design change was motivated in part by Russian forces' use of the letter "Z" on tanks, trucks and other equipment during their invasion of Ukraine.

Ammunition, Weapons and Other Equipment Bound for Ukraine Are Processed at Dover Air Force Base in the U.S. In January. (Courtesy of U.S. Air Force)

2:15 a.m. The U.S. is providing another $1 billion in security assistance for Ukraine, including additional artillery and coastal defense weapons, as well as ammunition for the artillery and advanced rocket systems needed to support Kyiv's defensive operations in the Donbas region, President Joe Biden says.

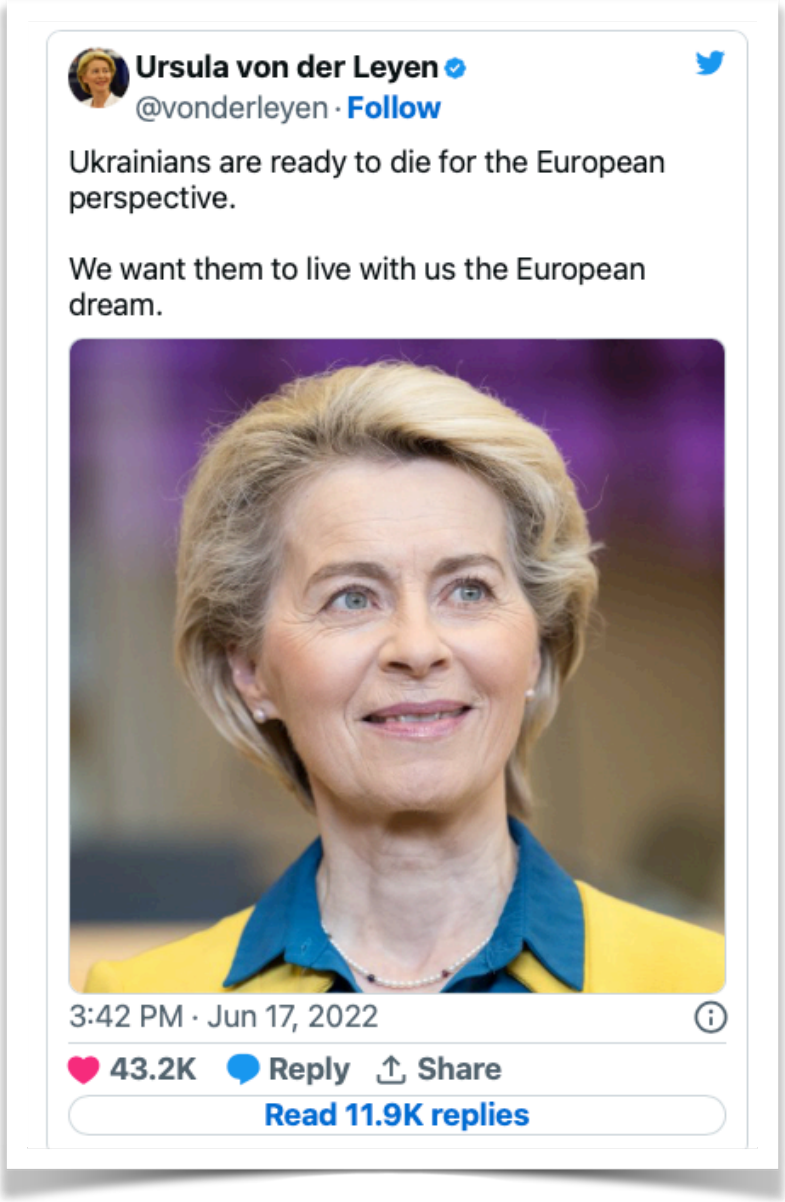
"I am also announcing an additional $225 million in humanitarian assistance to help people inside Ukraine, including by supplying safe drinking water, critical medical supplies and health care, food, shelter and cash for families to purchase essential items," Biden says, according to a White House statement.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg Says Group Members Are Expected To Agree an Assistance Package for Ukraine That Will Help It Transition to Modern Standard Weaponry at a Summit Later This Month. © Reuters

Friday, June 17

11:55 p.m. U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson makes a surprise visit to Kyiv.

8:00 p.m. The European Commission has recommended that Ukraine be made an official candidate for membership in the European Union.



4:58 p.m. The evacuation of 568 civilians sheltering in bunkers under the Azot chemical plant in the embattled city of Sievierodonetsk is currently impossible due to shelling and heavy fighting, the governor of Ukraine's Luhansk region says. In a post on Telegram messenger, he said there were 38 children taking shelter in the bunkers at the chemical plant.

Smoke Rises After a Military Strike on a Compound of Sievierodonetsk's Azot Chemical Plant, Amid a Russian Attack on the City on June 10. © Reuters

4:30 p.m. Ukrainian missiles hit a Russian naval tugboat transporting soldiers, weapons and ammunition to the Russian-occupied Zmiinyi (Snake) Island south of the Odesa region on Friday, the regional governor says. Odesa Gov. Maksym Marchenko identified the vessel as the Vasiliy Bekh. Ukraine's Naval Command said the tugboat had a TOR anti-air missile system on board but this had failed to stop the strike.

The Superyacht Amadea Is Moored in Honolulu on June 16. The Russian-Owned Yacht Arrived in Honolulu Harbor Flying an American Flag After the U.S. Last Week Won a Legal Battle in Fiji Over the $325 Million Vessel. © AP

2:30 p.m. A Russian-owned superyacht seized by the U.S. arrived in Honolulu Harbor on Thursday flying an American flag. The U.S. last week won a legal battle in Fiji over the $325 million vessel and immediately sailed it to Hawaii. The FBI has linked the Amadea to the Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov. The U.S. said Kerimov secretly bought the Cayman Island-flagged vessel last year through various shell companies.

11:00 a.m. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese says he will attend "an important" NATO meeting in Madrid at the end of the month as the U.S.-led alliance looks to further strengthen its ties in the wake of Russia's war in Ukraine. Australia, one of the largest non-NATO contributors to the West's support for Ukraine, has been supplying aid and defense equipment and has banned exports of alumina and aluminum ores, including bauxite, to Russia. "I'm going to NATO as a priority ... to support the

people of Ukraine standing up against this thuggish illegal behavior of Russia," Albanese said on Friday.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese Speaks During a Joint Press Conference With New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, in Sydney on June 10. © AP

8:08 a.m. Law enforcement in the U.S., Germany, the Netherlands and Britain have dismantled a global network of internet-connected devices that had been hacked by Russian cybercriminals and used for malicious purposes, the U.S. Justice Department says. The network, known as the RSOCKS botnet, comprised millions of hacked computers and devices worldwide, including Internet of Things gadgets like routers and smart garage openers, the department said. RSOCKS users paid a fee of between $30 and $200 per day to route malicious internet activity through compromised devices to hide the true source of the traffic, it said.

5:00 a.m. Italian power company Enel agrees to sell its entire stake in Russian unit PJSC Enel Russia to local buyers

for about 137 million euros ($145 million), according to a news release.
The buyers are energy group Lukoil and investment fund Gazprombank-Frezia.
"Following completion of the transaction, Enel will dispose of all its Russian power generation assets, which include approximately 5.6 GW of conventional capacity and around 300 MW of wind capacity at different stages of development," Enel says.

From Left, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, French President Emmanuel Macron and Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi Attend a News Conference in Kyiv on June 16. © Reuters

1:00 a.m. The leaders of France, Germany, Italy and Romania voice support for Ukraine's bid to join the European Union after a meeting with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv.
"All four of us support the immediate granting of EU candidate status for Ukraine," French President Emmanuel Macron says.

Zelenskyy says he has received invitations from European partners to attend some major upcoming events, including the NATO summit in Madrid.

12:15 a.m. The U.K.'s latest round of sanctions in response

to the Ukraine war target a Russian official accused of involvement in forced deportations and adoptions.

Russian Children's Rights Commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova "has been accused of enabling 2,000 vulnerable children being violently taken from the Luhansk and Donetsk regions and orchestrating a new policy to facilitate their forced adoptions in Russia," the U.K. government says in a statement.

Also sanctioned is the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, who London says has given "prominent support" to Russian aggression against Ukraine. The new sanctions come a day after Ukrainian President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy talked about Ukraine's defense needs by phone with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.
The Ukrainian people do not have the luxury of tiring of the war, British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss tells the House of Commons.

Saturday, June 18

3:40 a.m. In his prerecorded message to the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Chinese President Xi Jinping urges nations to " reject attempts at decoupling, supply disruption, unilateral sanctions and maximum pressure," in what appears to be a jab at Western nations' isolation campaign against Russia.

Xi calls for economic globalization and "true multilateralism."

"China stands ready to work with Russia and all other countries to explore development prospects," Xinhua reports the Chinese president as saying.

Other leaders speaking at the event include Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi and Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

3:10 a.m. Russian warships sailed south of Tokyo this week, while Chinese destroyers passed through a strait north of Japan, Japan's Ministry of Defense says. Read more.

1:50 a.m. Danish Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod accuses a Russian military ship of violating Denmark's territorial waters twice in one night.

In a Twitter post, the minister calls the incident "a deeply irresponsible, gross and completely unacceptable Russian provocation."

Kofod says the Russian ambassador has been summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Russian side's response was not immediately clear.

12:05 a.m. Western nations' attempt to destroy the Russian economy with sanctions has failed, Russian President Vladimir Putin says at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

Maintaining the pretext that the war is not a Russian invasion but a "special military operation," he says the economy is gradually returning to normal.

Putin pins the blame for energy and food inflation on the West, claiming Russia is not blocking shipments of Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea.

His speech was delayed by more than an hour after the forum, known as the "Russian Davos," was the target of a cyberattack.

Sunday, June 19

8:08 p.m. Russia says its offensive against Sievierodonetsk in eastern Ukraine is proceeding successfully, after it took control of a district in the outskirts of the city. "The offensive in the Sievierodonetsk direction is developing successfully," Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said in a video statement. He said the settlement of Metyolkine, on the eastern outskirts of the city, had been taken. Konashenkov said long-range Kalibr cruise missiles struck a command center in the Dnipropetrovsk region, killing Ukrainian generals and officers, including from the general staff.

1:42 p.m. Two top commanders of fighters who defended the Azovstal steel plant in Ukraine's southeastern port of Mariupol have been transferred to Russia for investigation, Russia's state news agency TASS reports. Uncertainty has surrounded the fate of hundreds of fighters captured by Russian forces in May after a monthslong siege of Mariupol. Moscow said at the time they were moved to breakaway Russian-backed entities in eastern Ukraine. Citing an unnamed Russian law enforcement source, TASS said late on Saturday that Svyatoslav Palamar, a deputy commander of the Azov battalion, and Serhiy Volynsky, the commander of the 36th Marine Brigade of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, were moved to Russia.

Monday, June 20

4:08 p.m. Russia's blockade of the export of millions of tons of Ukrainian grain is a war crime, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell says.

"We call on Russia to deblockade the (Ukrainian) ports ... It is inconceivable, one cannot imagine that millions of tons of wheat remain blocked in Ukraine while in the rest of the world people are suffering hunger," he tells reporters. "This is a real war crime, so I cannot imagine that this will last much longer," he says on arriving at a meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Luxembourg.

12:41 p.m. China's crude oil imports from Russia soared 55% from a year earlier to a record level in May, displacing Saudi Arabia as the top supplier, as refiners cashed in on discounted supplies amid sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine. Imports of Russian oil, including supplies pumped via the East Siberia Pacific Ocean pipeline and seaborne shipments from Russia's European and Far Eastern ports, totaled nearly 8.42 million tons, according to data from the Chinese General Administration of Customs. Chinese companies, including state refining giant Sinopec and state-run Zhenhua Oil, have ramped up purchases of Russian oil, enticed by steep discounts. China is the world's biggest crude oil importer.

Smoke and Flames Rise From Sievierodonetsk's Azot Chemical Plant on June 19. Russia's Defense Ministry Says its Attack on the City in Eastern Ukraine Is "Developing Successfully." © Reuters

9:03 a.m. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy predicts Russia will escalate its attacks this week as European Union leaders consider whether to back Kyiv's bid to join the bloc and Moscow presses its campaign to win control of the country's east.

"Obviously, this week we should expect from Russia an intensification of its hostile activities," Zelenskyy said in his Sunday nightly video address. "We are preparing. We are ready." Ukraine applied to join the EU four days after Russian troops poured across its border in February. The EU's executive, the European Commission, on Friday recommended that Ukraine receive candidate status.

Tuesday, June 21

10:00 p.m. U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland is visiting Ukraine to discuss efforts to identify, arrest and prosecute those involved in war crimes and other atrocities committed during Russia's invasion, a Justice Department official says. Garland will meet with Ukrainian Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova.

Dmitry Muratov's 2021 Nobel Peace Prize Medal Is Exhibited Before It Was Sold by Heritage Auctions in New York on June 20. © Reuters

9:30 a.m. The Russian co-winner of last year's Nobel Peace Prize, Dmitry Muratov, sold his prize medal for $103.5 million at an auction on Monday to raise money for children displaced by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The full purchase price of the medal will benefit UNICEF's humanitarian response for Ukraine's displaced children, said Heritage Auctions, which conducted the auction. Muratov, editor of the Novaya Gazeta, which is fiercely critical of the Kremlin,

won the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize with Maria Ressa of the Philippines.

6:29 a.m. The United States is in talks with Canada and other allies to further restrict Moscow's energy revenue by imposing a price cap on Russian oil, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said on Monday. "We are talking about price caps or a price exception that would enhance and strengthen recent and proposed energy restrictions by Europe, the United States, the U.K. and others, that would push down the price of Russian oil and depress Putin's revenues, while allowing more oil supply to reach the global market," Yellen told reporters in Toronto.

3:00 a.m. A food warehouse in the Black Sea port of Odesa was destroyed in a Russian missile attack but no civilians were killed, the Ukrainian military says. The Operational Command South says Russian forces fired 14 missiles at southern Ukraine during a three-hour barrage "in impotent anger at the successes of our troops.”

Wednesday, June 22

10:30 p.m. U.S. President Joe Biden has called on Congress to suspend the federal gasoline tax for three months, through September, to ease the pain at the pump for Americans.

The average price of a gallon of gasoline in the U.S. is hovering around $5. The federal gas tax accounts for 18 cents of what drivers pay per gallon.

Biden is under pressure as U.S. inflation runs high. A White House statement acknowledges that "a gas tax holiday alone will not, on its own, relieve the run up in costs that we've seen."

"But the president believes that at this unique moment when the war in Ukraine is imposing costs on American families, Congress should do what it can to provide working families breathing room."

In other energy news, a fire at an oil refinery in southern Russia's Rostov region Wednesday was caused by a drone attack, Russian state media report.

10:15 p.m. "Europe should be ready in case Russian gas is completely cut off," Fatih Birol, the head of the International Energy Agency, tells the Financial Times in an interview.

Birol says Russia's recent decision to reduce gas supplies to European countries may be a step toward deeper reductions that Moscow can use as a bargaining chip as Western nations apply sanctions pressure.

Casualties Have Amounted to About 55% of the Original Strength of the Forces of the Russian-Backed, Self-Proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) Britain Says. © Reuters

6:09 p.m. Seven Russian missiles hit the southern Ukrainian city of Mykolaiv on Wednesday, regional governor Vitaliy Kim says. In a statement on the Telegram messaging app, he gave no details of any casualties or damage.

2:39 p.m. Casualties have amounted to about 55% of the original strength of the forces of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), one of Russia's proxies in eastern Ukraine, Britain says. Figures published by the DPR showed that by June 16, 2,128 military personnel had been killed in action, with 8,897 wounded since the beginning of 2022, the British Defense Ministry said in a daily Twitter update.

2:33 p.m. Indonesian President and G-20 Chairman Joko Widodo will visit his counterparts in Ukraine and Russia next week to press for a peaceful resolution to their conflict,

his foreign minister says, the first such trip by an Asian leader. The Ukraine war has overshadowed meetings of the Group of 20 major economies this year, with Indonesia struggling to unify its members while resisting pressure from Western states threatening to boycott a November leaders' summit and pushing for Russia's exclusion.

7:29 a.m. Chevron Chief Executive Michael Wirth rebutted White House officials' criticism of the oil industry over energy costs, saying reducing fuel prices will require "a change in approach" by the government. The comments in a letter mark the latest in a series of acrimonious exchanges between the U.S. oil industry and President Joe Biden over who is to blame for high fuel prices that have helped drive inflation to 40-year highs.

The White House asked the CEOs of seven refiners and oil companies including Chevron to a meeting this week to discuss ways to increase production capacity and reduce energy prices. Wirth said he would attend. "Your administration has largely sought to criticize, and at times vilify, our industry," Wirth said in the letter to Biden. "These actions are not beneficial to meeting the challenges we face."

Germany Faces Certain Recession if Faltering Russian Gas Supplies Stop Completely, an Industry Body Warns. © Reuters

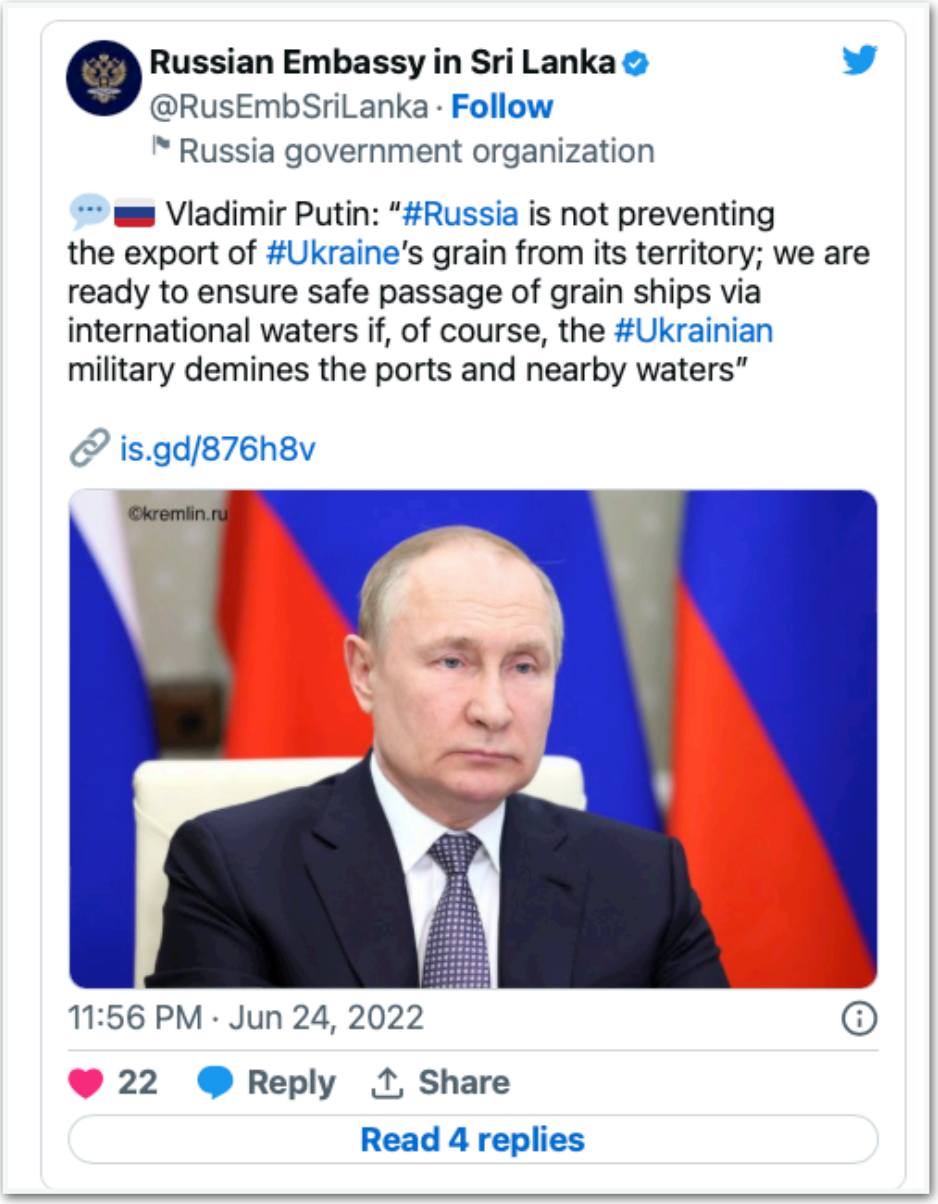
4:44 a.m. Germany faces certain recession if faltering Russian gas supplies stop completely, an industry body warns. The EU relied on Russia for as much as 40% of its gas needs before the war -- rising to 55% for Germany -- leaving a huge gap to fill in an already tight global gas market. Germany's BDI industry association cut its economic growth forecast for 2022 to 1.5% from the 3.5% expected before the war began on Feb. 24. It said a halt in Russian gas deliveries would make recession in Europe's largest economy inevitable.

12:54 a.m. The U.S. disagrees "vigorously" with Russia's position that the American citizens captured in Ukraine are not covered by the Geneva Conventions, a senior State Department official says, adding that Washington has conveyed its stance on the issue to Moscow.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, interviewed by U.S. television network NBC on Monday, said two Americans detained in Ukraine while fighting on the Ukrainian side of the war were mercenaries who endangered the lives of Russian service personnel and should face responsibility for their actions.

Thursday, June 23

10:20 p.m. Germany has moved to the second stage of its natural gas



emergency plan in response to cuts in the supply from Russia.

"We are in a gas crisis," says Robert Habeck, the economy minister, accusing Moscow of using gas as a weapon against Germany.

10:10 p.m. Nike will make a full withdrawal from the Russian market, Reuters reports, citing a statement from the sportswear company.

Nike stores in Russia had been suspended in response to President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine. The decision to leave the Russian market is mostly symbolic, since Russia and Ukraine account for less than 1% of Nike's revenue, Reuters reports.

6:00 p.m. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu says Ankara is investigating claims that Ukrainian grain has been stolen by Russia and would not allow any such grain to be brought to Turkey. Kyiv's ambassador to Ankara said in early June that Turkish buyers were among those receiving grain that Russia had stolen from Ukraine, adding he had sought Turkey's help to identify and capture individuals responsible for the alleged shipments.

"We take every claim seriously and are investigating them seriously. We notify especially the Ukrainian side of the result every time," Cavusoglu said.

British Citizens Aiden Aslin, Left, and Shaun Pinner, Right, and Moroccan Brahim Saadoun, Center, Face the Death Sentence for Fighting for Ukraine.

4:15 p.m. Two Britons and a Moroccan who were captured while fighting for Ukraine and sentenced to death by a court in the self-proclaimed breakaway Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) are preparing to appeal, the TASS news agency cites one of their lawyers as saying. The court in the DPR, one of Russia's proxies in eastern Ukraine, found the three men -- Britons Aiden Aslin and Shaun Pinner and Moroccan Brahim Saadoun -- guilty of "mercenary activities and committing actions aimed at seizing power and overthrowing the constitutional order of the DPR."

4:00 p.m. Oil prices continue to retreat as investors reassess the risks of recession and the impact of interest rate hikes in major economies on fuel demand. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures fell $1.4, or 1.3%, to $104.78 a barrel by 06:43 GMT. Brent crude futures fell $1.3, or 1.2%, to $110.40. Both benchmarks tumbled by as much as $3 a barrel in early morning Asian trade, after plunging around

3% in the previous session. They are at their lowest levels since mid-May.

The Town of Dobropillia, in the Donetsk Region, Tries To Clean Up on June 14. Russia "Want[S] To Destroy the Entire Donbas Step-by-Step," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Says. © Reuters

11:24 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urges its allies to accelerate the shipment of heavy weapons to match Russia on the battlefield. "The occupier's goal here is unchanged," he said in a video address. "They want to destroy the entire Donbas step-by-step. What is quickly needed is parity on the battlefield in order to halt this diabolical armada and push it beyond Ukraine's borders."

9:32 a.m. A Ukrainian official overseeing the country's push to join the European Union says she is "100%" certain all 27 EU nations will approve Ukraine's EU candidacy during a summit this week. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressed similar optimism, calling it a "crucial moment" for Ukraine. Ukraine's bid will be the top order of

business for EU leaders meeting in Brussels. In an interview with The Associated Press, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Olha Stefanishyna said the decision could come Thursday, when the leaders' summit starts.

4:00 a.m. The demotion of Le Yucheng, China's first vice foreign minister, has sent shock waves through national political circles.

On June 14, it was announced that Le had been appointed deputy head of the National Radio and Television Administration and "no longer serves as vice foreign minister." That meant the pro-Russian diplomat was no longer front-runner in the race to become foreign minister.

His fingerprints were all over the now-famous summit between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing on Feb. 4. But then came Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Read more in this week's China Up Close.

Russian President Vladimir Putin Attends a Meeting With Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Feb. 4. (Sputnik via Reuters)

12:45 a.m. In a virtual speech at the opening of the BRICS Business Forum, Chinese President Xi Jinping calls sanctions a "double-edged sword."

"To politicize the global economy and turn it into one's tool or weapon, and willfully impose sanctions by using one's primary position in the international financial and monetary systems will only end up hurting one's own interests as well as those of others, and inflict suffering on everyone," Xi says, without mentioning Russia or the Western nations sanctioning it, according to a transcript published by Xinhua.

Just last week, Xi denounced heavy-handed unilateral sanctions in a virtual speech to the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

At the BRICS event, Xi describes the "Ukraine crisis" as "another wake-up call for all in the world," taking a veiled jab at NATO.

"It reminds us that blind faith in the so-called 'position of strength' and attempts to expand military alliances and seek one's own security at the expense of others will only land oneself in a security dilemma," the Chinese leader says.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his virtual opening address at the BRICS event, mentions neither Russia nor Ukraine, instead touting India's economic policies.

The BRICS are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

High Gasoline Prices Have Been One of the Most Glaring Indicators of Rising Inflation for Americans. © Reuters

Friday, June 24

3:00 p.m. Ukrainian troops will "have to be withdrawn" from the mostly Russian-occupied battleground city of Sievierodonetsk, the regional governor says. Some of the heaviest fighting of the entire Russian invasion of Ukraine has taken place in Sievierodonetsk, where street-by-street battles have been going on for a month, with Russia slowly and painstakingly taking more ground. "Remaining in positions smashed to pieces over many months just for the sake of staying there does not make sense," Gov. Serhiy Gaidai said on television.

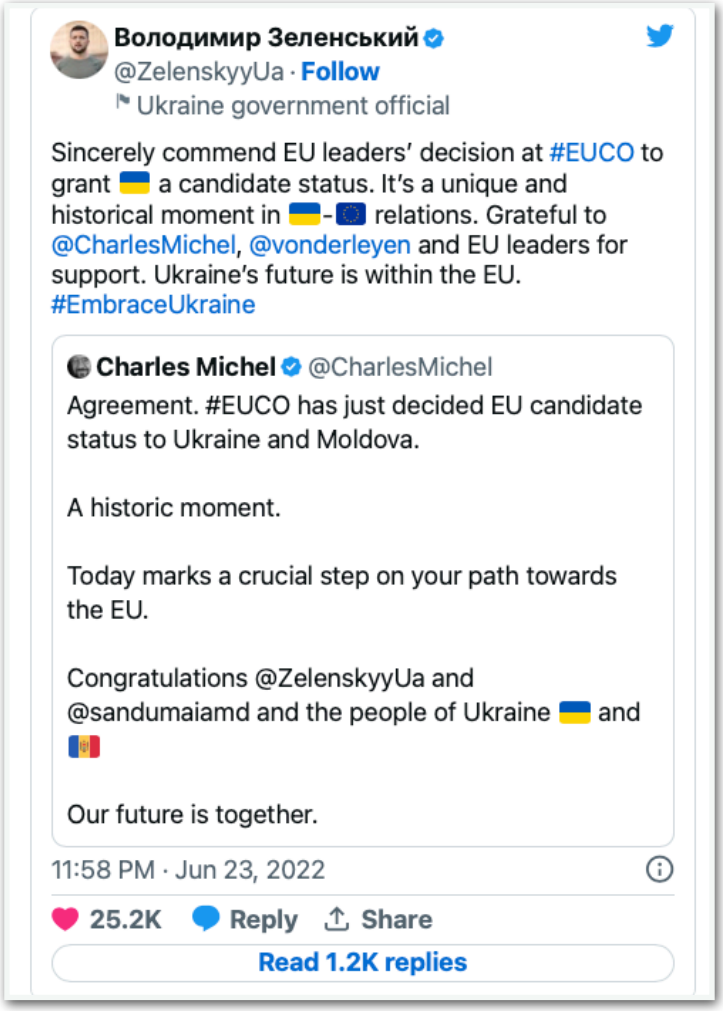
A Launch Truck Fires a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System at the Yakima Training Center in Washington State, U.S. (The Olympian via AP)

7:30 a.m. The United States will send another $450 million in military aid to Ukraine, including additional medium-range rocket systems, to help reverse Russian progress in the war, officials say. The latest package includes four High

Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, which will double the number Ukraine has now. All four were pre-positioned in Europe and training on them has begun, said a Pentagon spokesman. The first four HIMARS that the U.S. sent have already gone to the battlefield in Ukraine.

4:50 a.m. Ukraine may be on the path to EU membership, but that does not mean the journey will be a short one. EU leaders say Ukraine must meet conditions on the rule of law, corruption and the judiciary in order to advance to the next stage of accession negotiations, the Financial Times reports. Croatia, the most recent country to join the EU, took nine years to go from candidate status to membership, the FT reports. Ukraine applied for EU membership in February.

3:45 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reacts to the European Council decision.



3:25 a.m. Ukraine has been granted European Union candidate status, European Council President Charles Michel says. Moldova's candidate status is also now official. "Today marks a crucial step on your path towards the EU," Michel says in a tweet.

12:45 a.m. BRICS leaders gingerly weigh in on Ukraine at a summit where Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin push back against Western pressure.
"We have discussed the situation in Ukraine and recall our national positions as expressed at the appropriate fora, namely the UNSC [United Nations Security Council] and UNGA [United Nations General Assembly]," the BRICS

leaders say in a joint declaration marking their latest summit. They stop short of using the words "war" or "invasion" to describe Russia's aggression against Ukraine. "We support talks between Russia and Ukraine," the leaders say, adding that they have also discussed concerns about the humanitarian situation in and around Ukraine.
The BRICS are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Saturday, June 25

11:45 p.m. Russian forces are in full control of Sievierodonetsk, marking Kyiv's biggest setback on the battlefield in more than a month. The eastern city was under attack for weeks in some of the heaviest fighting of the war.

"The city is now under the full occupation of Russia. They are trying to establish their own order, as far as I know they have appointed some kind of commandant," Sievierodonetsk Mayor Oleksandr Stryuk says on national television, according to Reuters, confirming Russian control of the ruined city once home to 100,000 people.

Pro-Russian separatists say Moscow's forces are now attacking the last major Ukrainian-held bastion in eastern Luhansk province, Sievierodonetsk's twin city Lysychansk on the opposite bank of the Siverskyi Donets River.

4:15 a.m. At the Uniting for Global Food Security Conference in Berlin, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken echoes fellow Group of Seven top diplomats' statement on Russia's role in worsening food supply instability.

"The Russian military is laying waste to Ukrainian farms and grain silos, stealing Ukrainian grain and the equipment needed to harvest it, blocking access to and from Ukrainian ports by the sea," Blinken says.

Moscow has rejected such accusations and says it is ready to help. The Russian Embassy in Sri Lanka, now in the throes of an economic crisis, puts out the following message.

Sunday, June 26

Smoke Rises After a Missile Strike in Kyiv on June 26. © Reuters

6:01 p.m. The Group of Seven must impose more sanctions on Russia and send Ukraine more heavy arms, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweets Sunday as the G-7 summit in Germany continues.
The tweet includes a photo of an apparently injured child being moved by first responders. "This 7 y.o. Ukrainian kid was sleeping peacefully in Kyiv until a Russian cruise missile

blasted her home," Kubela writes. "Many more around Ukraine are under strikes.

3:00 a.m. European Union leaders' decision to grant EU candidate member status to Ukraine and Moldova continues a policy of Russian "containment," Moscow says.
"Such an aggressive approach of the European Union obviously carries the potential for the emergence of new deeper lines of division and crises in Europe as a whole," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova says in a statement. "This policy of Brussels has nothing to do with the real needs of the inhabitants of Ukraine and the EU countries."
Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov tells reporters that Moscow believes it is unlikely that the EU's "Russophobic" policy will disappear in the near or long term. "That's the path chosen by the Europeans," he says.

1:00 a.m. Foreign ministers of the Group of Seven nations have held a meeting "focused on Russia's culpability for aggravating the global food crisis as a result of the war."
"G-7 foreign ministers made clear that Russia's war against Ukraine is exacerbating food insecurity, including by blocking the Black Sea, bombing grain silos and ports, and damaging Ukraine's agricultural infrastructure," according to a chair's statement.
3:23 p.m. Less than 3% of Japanese companies operating in Russia have decided to withdraw following its invasion of Ukraine, the lowest proportion among the Group of Seven nations, a recent survey shows. A considerable number of Japanese companies were cautious about exiting from Russia, with many only suspending operations in the hope of resuming business in the future, the analysis of the survey said.

Only 4, or 2.4%, of the 168 Japanese companies operating in Russia had decided by June 19 to cease business in the country, according to analysis by Teikoku Databank based on the survey conducted by the Yale School of Management in the United States covering around 1,300 major companies worldwide. The figure was far lower than the around 48% of British companies that have announced their withdrawal from Russia, followed by about 33% of Canadian companies and around 29% of U.S. enterprises.

Russian Servicemen Demonstrate the Iskander Missile System at a 2015 Event Outside Moscow. © Reuters

2:45 a.m. Russia will provide Belarus with the Iskander missile system in the "next few months," President Vladimir Putin tells Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko at a meeting.

The system can launch both cruise and short-range ballistic missiles capable of carrying conventional and nuclear warheads, Putin says, according to a readout on the Russian presidential website.

Lukashenko claims concerns about "training flights of aircraft of the United States of America and NATO, which are trained to carry nuclear warheads."
The meeting in St. Petersburg comes as a Ukrainian defense official accuses Russia of trying to drag Belarus into the war.

1:52 a.m. The U.S. and other Group of Seven rich countries will agree on an import ban on new gold from Russia when they meet for a three-day summit in Germany that begins later today, a source tells Reuters.
The U.S. Treasury Department will issue a determination to prohibit the import of new gold into the U.S. on Tuesday, which will further isolate Russia from the global economy by preventing its participation in the gold market, the source says.

1:00 a.m. Sweden still has not resolved Turkey's concerns over support for "terrorism" and an arms embargo, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan tells Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson in a phone call on the Scandinavian nation's bid to join NATO.
Erdogan, who has expressed opposition to Sweden and Finland becoming NATO members, says he wants to see binding commitments on these matters. Ankara accuses the two countries of supporting organizations affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), an armed group that is outlawed in Turkey.
The NATO chief also had a phone call with Erdogan.

Monday, June 27

10:33 p.m. Russian hacker group Killnet claims responsibility for Monday's denial-of-service cyberattack on Lithuania, citing the decision by Vilnius to block the transit of some goods sanctioned by the European Union to the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, Reuters reports. A spokesperson for the group confirmed to Reuters that it was behind the attack, which affected state and private institutions.

9:30 p.m. Group of Seven leaders plan to expand sanctions against Russia, targeting Moscow's imports of components and technology crucial to producing military equipment, the White House says as President Joe Biden meets with his G-7 peers in Germany.
Washington also intends to raise tariffs on about 570 groups of Russian products worth $2.3 billion, as well as ban the import of new gold into the U.S. Leaders of the G-7 rich democracies also commit to impose sanctions on those

responsible for human rights abuses, including war crimes and Russia's tactics to steal Ukrainian grain, the White House says.

Russian Oil Is Sought by Crisis-Hit Sri Lanka, Which Has Sent Two Ministers to Moscow To Negotiate for Fuel. © Reuters

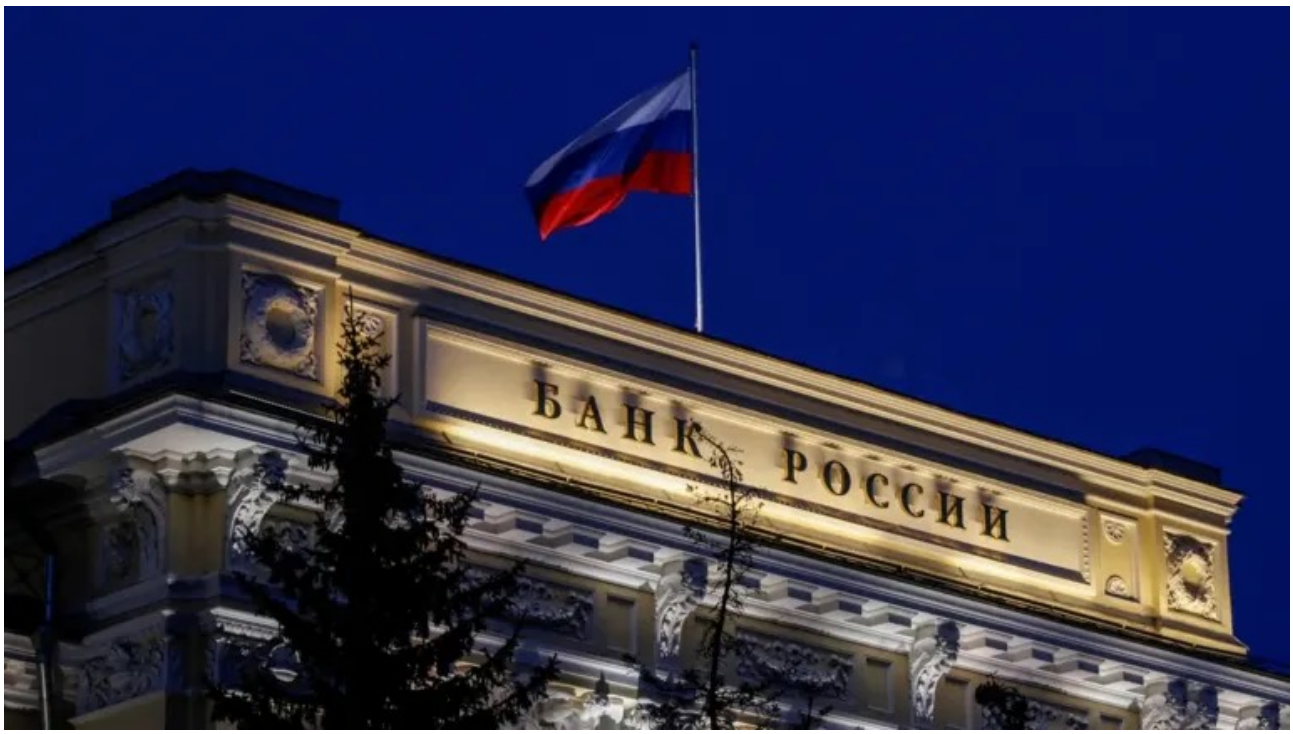
6:30 p.m. The Group of Seven rich democracies will commit on Tuesday to a new package of coordinated actions meant to raise pressure on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine, and will finalize plans for a price cap on Russian oil, a senior U.S. official says. The announcement came amid news that Russia looked set to plunge into its first sovereign default in decades.
"The dual objectives of G-7 leaders have been to take direct aim at (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's revenues, particularly through energy, but also to minimize the spillovers and the impact on the G-7 economies and the rest of the world," the U.S. official says on the sidelines of the annual G-7 summit.

6:15 p.m. Ukrainian grain exports in the first 22 days of June fell by around 44% from a year earlier to 1.11 million tons, agriculture ministry data show. The volumes included 978,000 tons of corn, 104,000 tons of wheat and 24,000

tons of barley. Ukraine exported up to 6 million tons of grain a month before Russia launched an invasion on Feb. 24.

3:30 p.m. Sri Lanka is sending two ministers to Russia to negotiate for fuel, which the Indian Ocean island nation has almost run out of as its economy has collapsed. Power and Energy Minister Kanchana Wijesekera said the two ministers are scheduled to leave for Russia on Monday to continue in-person talks that Sri Lanka has been having with Russian authorities to directly purchase fuel, and to discuss related issues. He urged people on Saturday not to line up for fuel, saying new shipments would be delayed due to "banking and logistics reasons."

1:38 p.m. Oil prices extend gains as investors stood on guard for any moves against Russian oil and gas exports that might come out of a meeting of leaders of the Group of Seven meeting in Germany. Brent crude futures edged up 22 cents, or 0.2%, to $113.34 a barrel by 0342 GMT after rebounding 2.8% on Friday. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude was at $107.73 a barrel, up 11 cents, or 0.1%, following a 3.2% gain in the previous session.



Russian Central Bank Headquarters in Moscow. The Country's Potential Default on Foreign Debt Could Further Alienate It From the Global Financial System Following Sanctions Imposed Over the War in Ukraine. © Reuters

8:30 a.m. Russia is poised to default on its foreign debt for the first time since 1918 following the Bolshevik Revolution, further alienating the country from the global financial system following sanctions imposed over its war in Ukraine. The country faces a Sunday night deadline to meet a 30-day grace period on interest payments originally due May 27. But it could take time to confirm a default. Russia calls any default artificial because it has the money to pay its debts but says sanctions have frozen its foreign currency reserves held abroad.

6:40 a.m. A "stealthy network of commandos and spies" from the U.S. and allies is "rushing to provide weapons, intelligence and training" for Ukraine, with much of the work being done outside the country at bases in Germany and elsewhere, The New York Times reports, citing American and European officials.

Some CIA personnel continue to secretly operate in Ukraine, mostly in Kyiv, "directing much of the vast amounts of intelligence the United States is sharing with Ukrainian forces, according to current and former officials," the Times reports. "At the same time, a few dozen commandos from other NATO countries, including Britain, France, Canada and Lithuania, also have been working inside Ukraine."

5:09 a.m. U.S. President Joe Biden tells allies "we have to stay together" against Russia on Sunday as G-7 leaders gathered for a summit dominated by the war in Ukraine and its impact on food and energy supplies, as well as the global economy. At the start of the meeting in the Bavarian Alps, four of the Group of Seven major industrial nations moved to ban imports of Russian gold to tighten sanctions on Moscow and cut off its means of financing the invasion of Ukraine. But it was not clear whether there was consensus on the plan, with European Council President Charles Michel saying the issue would need to be handled carefully and discussed further.

Tuesday, June 28

4:36 p.m. Group of Seven leaders have agreed to study placing price caps on imports of Russian oil and gas to try to limit Moscow's ability to fund its invasion of Ukraine, G-7 officials say. The European Union will explore with international partners ways to curb energy prices, including the feasibility of introducing temporary import price caps, a

section of the final G-7 communique seen by Reuters said. The officials said this meant both oil and gas.

11:11 a.m. Russian forces shelled central districts of the city of Kharkiv, hitting apartment buildings and a primary school, killing five people and wounding 22, the regional governor says. Five children were among the injured, Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Synehubov said.

6:30 a.m. Russia has defaulted on its international bonds for the first time in more than a century, the White House and Moody's credit agency say, as sweeping sanctions have effectively cut the country off from the global financial system, rendering its assets untouchable. Moody's credit agency later on Monday said that the missed coupon payment constituted a default. "Further defaults on coupon payments are likely," Moody's analysts wrote.

5:48 a.m. The leaders of the Group of Seven nations, gathered for their annual summit in Germany, condemned Russia's "abominable" missile attack on a shopping mall in the Ukraine town of Kremenchuk.
"Indiscriminate attacks on innocent civilians contribute to a war crime," they wrote in a joint statement tweeted by the German government spokesperson. "Russian President Putin and those responsible will be held to account."

2:00 a.m. At least 10 people are dead after a Russian missile strike on a shopping mall in the central Ukrainian city of Kremenchuk, Reuters quotes regional governor Dmytro Lunin as saying.

G-7 Leaders Accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of a War Crime Following a Missile Strike on a Shopping Mall in the Central Ukrainian City of Kremenchuk on June 27. (Viacheslav Priadko via AP)

1:00 a.m. NATO plans to increase its forces on high alert to more than 300,000 from roughly 40,000 in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says in Brussels ahead of a summit of the alliance's leaders in Spain.

The buildup would bolster NATO defenses in eastern member states, Stoltenberg tells the Financial Times, amid concerns expressed in the Baltic states over the alliance's envisioned response to a Russian invasion.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Attends a Working Session of Group of Seven Leaders via Video Link. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service via Reuters)

12:30 a.m. South Korea will hold talks with Poland on exporting weapons to the Eastern European nation on the sidelines of this week's NATO summit as Seoul considers providing indirect military support to Ukraine by shoring up a neighbor.

South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol is headed to the NATO gathering in Spain, where he is scheduled to meet with other world leaders, according to the Blue House.

Poland, which maintains the largest armed forces in Eastern Europe, ranks third worldwide in military aid committed to Kyiv, behind only the U.S. and the U.K., according to the Germany-based Kiel Institute for the World Economy. Read more.

Wednesday, June 29

8:10 p.m. Britain on Wednesday announces sanctions on oligarch Vladimir Potanin, described by London as Russia's second-richest man and who has been buying assets from firms exiting Russia over the invasion of Ukraine. Potanin, known as Russia's "Nickel King," was included in the latest wave of sanctions listings by Britain which included business figures, financial firms and other entities.

5:35 p.m. Indonesian President Joko Widodo arrived Wednesday morning in Kyiv, where he will meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and urge him to "open room for a dialogue" and address the global food crisis. The office of the Indonesian president said Widodo will meet Zelenskyy at Mariinskyi Palace at midday.

12:20 p.m. Dozens of people were still missing after a Russian missile strike on a shopping mall killed at least 18 in central Ukraine two days ago. Ukraine said Russia had killed civilians deliberately when it pounded the mall in Kremenchuk. Moscow said the mall was empty and it had struck a nearby arms depot. A regional governor meanwhile said the situation was "very difficult" in Lysychansk in the east.

6:40 a.m. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russia of being a "terrorist state" at the United Nations on Tuesday, prompting Russia to charge that he was using a Security Council address as a "remote PR campaign" to solicit more Western weapons. Zelenskyy pushed the Security Council to expel Moscow from the United Nations and to create a tribunal to investigate actions of the Russian

military in Ukraine. However, Russia has veto power on the council and can shield itself from any such action.
"Russia does not have the right to take part in discussing and voting in regard to the war in Ukraine, which is unprovoked and simply colonialist of the part of Russia," Zelenskyy told the council. "I urge you to deprive the delegation of the terrorist state of its powers."
All 15 Security Council members, including Russia, stood for a moment of silence after Zelenskyy asked them to "commemorate all the Ukrainians who have been killed in this war."

3:50 a.m. Turkey has agreed to support bids by Finland and Sweden to join NATO, Finnish President Sauli Niinisto says. Read more.

1:40 a.m. The Biden administration has banned the import of Russian gold into the U.S., part of a new round of penalties response to the invasion of Ukraine.
"As announced at the G7 Summit, the United States is joined in taking action against Russian gold, the country's biggest nonenergy export, by the United Kingdom, Canada, and Japan," the Department of the Treasury says in a news release.
The Treasury Department sanctioned an additional 70 entities in a move it said will "strike at the heart of Russia's ability to develop and deploy weapons and technology used for Vladimir Putin's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine."
The 70 targets include state-owned defense and industrial group Rostec and affiliate Tupolev, the maker of Russian strategic bombers.
The U.S. Department of State, meanwhile, has imposed sanctions on an additional 49 entities and people. They

include Halyna Danylchenko, who is accused of being a Russian-installed puppet in control of the Ukrainian city of Melitopol after the mayor was kidnapped, the State Department says is a news release.

1:05 a.m. The Group of Seven wealthy democracies agrees to look into capping the price of Russian oil and calls out China on human rights, including alleged forced labor in Xinjiang.
The leaders of those countries highlight these and other issues in a wide-ranging joint communique released as they concluded a three-day summit in Schloss Elmau, Germany. On the final day, they also announce additional support worth $4.5 billion to help developing countries cope with a deepening food crisis.
With the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine dominating the agenda, the G-7 promises long-term support for Kyiv. An overarching diplomatic aim was to enhance ties with democracies in the Global South, including Indonesia and India, and show a united front against authoritarianism. The two Asian countries -- important players in the Group of 20 as host and future host -- were invited to join discussions on global challenges. Read more.

Group of Seven Leaders Have Agreed To Study Potential Price Caps on Russian Oil and Gas To Limit Moscow's Ability To Fund its Invasion of Ukraine, G-7 Officials Say. © Reuters.

Thursday, June 30

11:00 p.m. Russian forces have withdrawn from the strategic Black Sea outpost of Snake Island. Russia's Ministry of Defense calls the move a "gesture of goodwill" that will help restart Ukrainian grain shipments. But Ukraine says its forces drove the Russians away in retreat. "So, in order for Moscow to show its goodwill, we have to beat it up regularly," Ukrainian presidential adviser and negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak tweets.

8:00 p.m. Indonesian President Joko Widodo is in Moscow for a meeting with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, offering to broker Ukraine peace talks and discuss the global food crisis.
The Indonesian leader is on a whirlwind trip that took him to this week's Group of Seven summit in Germany and a meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Before departing for Moscow, he had just returned to Poland aboard an overnight train from Kyiv. Read more

5:20 p.m. The European Court of Human Rights says it has told Russia to ensure that the death penalty is not carried out against two Britons who were captured after fighting for Ukraine. Earlier this month, a court in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic in eastern Ukraine sentenced British citizens Aiden Aslin and Shaun Pinner to death, accusing them of "mercenary activities."

5:10 p.m. Sweden will send more anti-tank weapons and machine guns to Ukraine, Sweden's Defense Ministry says. The arms package, which also includes equipment for mine clearing, is valued at around 500 million Swedish crowns ($49 million).

2:00 p.m. South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol warned a NATO summit of the threat to universal values now that the world is mired in new conflicts and competitions, a reference to Russia's aggression in Ukraine and China's engagement with Russia, a South Korean official said. Yoon became the first South Korean leader to attend a NATO summit, joining as an observer at a meeting in Spain. "As a new structure of competitions and conflicts is taking shape, there is also a movement that denies the universal values that we have been protecting," Yoon said in a speech on Wednesday.

11:07 a.m. Russia presses on with its offensive in eastern Ukraine after NATO branded Moscow the biggest "direct threat" to Western security and agreed on plans to modernize Kyiv's beleaguered armed forces. Ukrainian authorities said they were trying to evacuate residents from the front-line eastern city of Lysychansk, the focus of Russia's attacks, where about 15,000 people remained under relentless shelling. "Fighting is going on all the time. The Russians are constantly on the offensive. There is no letup," regional Gov. Serhiy Gaidai told Ukrainian television. "Absolutely everything is being shelled."

6:34 a.m. President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that Russia would respond in kind if NATO deployed troops and infrastructure in Finland and Sweden after they join the U.S.-led military alliance. "With Sweden and Finland, we don't have the problems that we have with Ukraine. They want to join NATO, go ahead," Putin told Russian state television after talks with regional leaders in the central Asian ex-Soviet state of Turkmenistan. "But they must understand there was no threat before, while now, if military

contingents and infrastructure are deployed there, we will have to respond in kind and create the same threats for the territories from which threats toward us are created.”

A U.S. Air Force F-35 Lightning II Receives Fuel Midair Over Poland in February 2022. (U.S. Air Force via Reuters)

2:55 a.m. The U.S. will increase its military presence in Europe, President Joe Biden says following meetings that show "the determination of our alliance to defend every inch of NATO territory."

"Today I'm announcing the United States will enhance our force posture in Europe and respond to the changed security environment, as well as strengthening our collective security," Biden tells reporters at a news conference with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg.

Additional U.S. troops will be stationed in Romania, bolstering NATO's eastern defenses.

"And we're going to send two additional F-35 squadrons to the U.K., and station additional air defense and other capabilities in Germany and in Italy," the president adds.

2:30 a.m. Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has met Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, offering to play a role as a peace broker between the Ukrainian leader and Russian President Vladimir Putin.
"I offered to bring a message from President Zelenskyy to President Putin, whom I will visit very soon," Widodo tells a news conference with Zelenskyy, according to the Indonesian presidential office.
Widodo headed back to Poland shortly after the meeting, and was expected to depart Thursday for Moscow, where he is slated to meet Putin. Read more.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Attends a Working Session of G-7 Leaders via Video Link in Kyiv on June 27. He Asked the U.N. Security Council the Next Day To Deprive the "Terrorist State" Russia of its Powers on the Council. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service/Handout via Reuters)

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